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[THE PARCHEMENT ENVELOPE.]

THE WARNING VOICE.

By the Author of "Mrs. Larkell's Boarding School," "Man and his Idol," &c.

CHAPTER IV.

ORMOND REDGRAVE.

A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts
By his ingenious beauty, by the gleam
Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
By all the graces with which Nature's hand
Had lavishly arrayed him.

Wordsworth.

The arrest of Andrew Nolan did not bring to an abrupt close the birthday festivities at Ingarstone. The guests remained, but, as may be supposed, what had happened threw a gloom over the remainder of the day.

It would have done so, if only from the effect it had in reviving the painful memory of the tragedy which had happened four years ago.

But beyond this there was the startling fact that a murderer had participated in that day's pleasures, and that his crime had been brought to light—so at least it seemed—in the presence of his unconscious associates.

Add to this that the accused was the almost accepted suitor of his host's daughter, the sister of his hapless victim!

Clearly there could be no more mirth. People could not dance, and feast, and sing, and enjoy themselves, under the shadow of such realities as these. Lord Ingarstone's extreme politeness—which was as invulnerable as a suit of Milan steel—prompted him to do all in his power to put his guests at their ease; but it was in vain. The one fact that lady Beatrice was compelled to retire from the scene, was sufficient. Even conversation was at an end, except that carried on in whispers by scattered groups; and soon, all, save those staying in the house, devised pretexts for ordering their carriages. Their leave-takings with the young Lord Cecil were cordial, and warm wishes were expressed for his welfare, now that he had entered on the career of manhood; but it was clear

that people got away as quickly as they could, and felt a sense of relief at their escape.

Before night had fairly set in the gorgeous apartments, over which so much care and wealth had been lavished for this day's entertainment, were silent, and all but deserted.

As soon as it became known, the bold, decided course pursued by Ormond Redgrave, caused a profound sensation in the neighbourhood.

People differed in their views about it.

Almost every shade of opinion was expressed by individuals of various ranks, from Lord Ingarstone himself, down to Morris Holt's wife, who sat by the hearth, moaning, and cooling her face, which had been cut and bruised by that fall on the gravel path.

Some thought the charge too hastily made. Others regarded it as prompted by some bad feeling on Redgrave's part. All concurred that it would have been quite as well if an opportunity for explanation had been offered to Nolan before he was given into custody.

To all these opinions Ormond Redgrave was supremely indifferent.

It was in his nature to be so.

Virtues and vices are often hereditary, and the special vice which distinguished the Redgrave family was—pride. Not that they regarded it as a vice. No; they would have pointed to it as the source of all their greatness, and would inevitably have given it the rank of a special virtue. In this case, indeed, it almost seemed one, and more particularly as it shone in the character of its living representative, the noble, chivalric Ormond.

He was at the time he is introduced to the reader in his twenty-third year. Sir Edgar, his father, had died three years before, and thus, almost prematurely, there had devolved on Ormond the duty of attending to the family affairs, and taking charge of Lady Redgrave, his father's second wife, and widow, and her ladyship's daughter, and his sister, Isidora, or Dora, as she was usually called.

News of his father's death had reached Ormond while on his travels, immediately on the close of his college career, and he had hurried back to England,

Most reluctantly had he come, but with no thought of disobeying the summons. The head of the family was gone: it became his duty to supply his place. That duty he did not attempt to shirk.

In Ormond's mind his family was everything.

It was in this that his pride took its root. He came of a stock that could trace its descent, point by point, from a period so remote that it was lost in antiquity. The Redgraves did not come in with the Conqueror, and they despised those who did. They were of the old Saxon stock, which lavished blood and treasure to preserve the land free from the polluting foot of the petty Duke of Normandy. That they had failed in their attempt was nothing to the Redgraves. It is the fate of patriots to perish in struggles to save an ungrateful country, and to be forgotten in the triumph of the invaders. Enough that the old Saxon nobility did fight, did stand up manfully for their own, and only yielded to overwhelming numbers.

Ormond had been taught to glory in this from his cradle.

There was a great pedigree in Sir Edgar's library, which, as a child, had attracted his attention from its singularity, and he had soon begun to ask the meaning of that tree growing out of a man's body and bearing fruit, each inscribed with an unreadable name? And in due course it was explained to him, and he was taught the catechism of pride of birth.

It was told him in perfect goodfaith, and as if it had been true, that "birth," in the sense of a long line of ancestry, is superior to everything else, and that his claims, on this ground, were higher than almost anybody's.

"There is many a family," his mother would say, "which holds its head up and talks of blue blood; which we can afford to look down upon with contempt. The best of them think it a fine thing to trace back their line to the duke (she always called William the Conqueror, 'the duke') whereas we were lords of the soil before that trumpery person's family was known even in Normandy. Never forget this Ormond, never forget it!"

And he never did.

Such lessons found a congenial soil in the free, open

impetuous native of the handsome boy, whose face, he often heard them say, was like an angel's, and whose intelligence marked him out, from a mere child, as the leader of his playmates.

He felt that by virtue of his blood he was the superior of all with whom he mingled, and, without arrogance or effrontery, he always contrived to make this felt.

While he was at Eton it had cost him a battle or two; but he did not mind that. He could take his part with his fists, and he did so again and again, generally coming off the victor.

Once only he was cowed, and that, not by a blow, but a remark.

He had been asserting the claims of his family to Saxon descent, when a great bullying fellow, a wealthy brewer's son, suddenly burst into a loud laugh, and put a question that brought the lad's blood in a crimson flush to the very roots of his hair.

"The Saxons," said the brewer's son, "as everybody knows, had blue eyes and flaxen hair. How comes it, Master Ormond, that your hair is black and your eyes like aloe?"

Ormond was staggered.

The point had never occurred to him, and he did not know what to answer.

"You don't know, eh?" demanded the bully. "You can't tell? Well, then, I can. Either your father's pedigree's all moonshine, or your mother's descended from a Norman—or a Saxon."

A loud, boisterous "ha! ha!" went through the playground at this stroke of humour, and for the first time in his life, Ormond's cheeks burnt with shame. He did not long permit his mother's name to rest under the stigma. Before the sun had set that night, the brewer's son had received a thrashing which he never forgot or forgave; but the sting rankled in Ormond's mind. He could not rest till he had satisfied himself about the point, and it was to his mother herself that on an early opportunity he applied for information.

The question evidently startled her. He saw that. He noticed that she changed colour, and clutched at the arms of the chair in which she sat. But when she answered him it was very coolly and calmly.

"The course of time brings with it great changes," Ormond, she replied. "Family portraits show this, even among the Spaniards, where the great families intermarry so much among themselves. The descendants of the dark-eyed Castilians are often fair. It is impossible to account for nature."

Ormond was satisfied. True, in after years, when he recalled his mother's words, he realised also that changing colour and startled expression which had accompanied them, and sometimes wondered why this should have been?

But this did not trouble him. His confidence in his birth and in himself was restored, and it gave him that easy, self-reliant manner, which is the surest test of the true gentleman, and which is never to be imitated. A man may become wealthy, and rise to high positions in society; but neither his money nor his acquired station will give him that bearing which we call "gentlemanly," and which is the heritage of the highly-born.

This Ormond had to perfection. He struck one even more strongly than his personal advantages, great as they were. Perhaps it completed the charm of them. His face, oval face, with his broad, white brow overarching with clustering locks, black as night; with its large, flashing eyes, its straight, sensitive nose, and exquisitely shaped mouth, was eminently striking. It had the advantage of surrounding a figure, tall and manly, and as perfect in its proportions as the statue which is named the Antinous. But, after all, the great charm lay in that perfect repose which attended every movement, and which, as we have said, the thorough-bred man alone possesses.

It was simply as a guest that Ormond Redgrave had come to Ingarstone, and now, within an hour, he unexpectedly found himself the hero of the distinguished assemblage there. He accepted that position quietly, and fully prepared for all the consequences it might entail upon him.

On the day after Nolan's arrest, Lord Ingarstone requested Ormond's presence in his library.

The young man readily complied with his host's wish.

"This occurrence has completely unnerved me," Redgrave said, his lordship, languidly; "d'ye think it possible that Nolan is really guilty?"

"No doubt of it, I should say," replied Redgrave, confidently.

"He has the bracelet last worn by my darling, certainly," his lordship said, with an earnestness which those who judged him by his affected Regency manner would not have supposed him capable of.

"That of course is a strong point," returned the other; "but it was my knowledge of the fellow's antecedents that led me to take the step I did."

"Ah, you spoke of having seen him at Baltimore. That was under suspicious circumstances?"

"You shall judge. In the course of my wander through the principal towns of America, I happened to find myself at the one I've mentioned. There was a great commotion in the place at the time about a quarrel at a gaming-house, in which a number of British naval officers had been unmercifully fleeced, and one had been shot down in the fracas which followed. The whole of the people found in the house at the time were arrested; and a great number of them were brought before the magistrates. I was in the court when the prisoners were brought up, and among them I was disgusted to find one of my own countrymen."

"Need I say who that was?"

"Not Andrew Nolan?"

"The same."

"But he might have been as innocent of offence as the rest of the officers?"

"He might, only circumstances were against him. It transpired that his ship had been lying in the harbour some time, and that the officers had lived fast, and had lost heavy sums at the gaming-tables, particularly at this house. It further came out that Nolan had admitted that he was reduced to his last guinea; yet on meeting the officers of a ship newly arrived in the harbour, he had first dined with them, and then permitted them to accompany him to this disreputable place. There they played and lost; he played and won. There in time grew infuriated at their losses, declared that they had been cheating, a riotous scene, and as I have said, one poor fellow was shot down. When the officers came rushing in, one discharged pistol after was found, and whose do you suppose it was?"

Ingarstone shrugged his shoulders and raised his eyebrows.

"Ingenious to say," he replied.

"Why," said Redgrave, impressively, "in this Nolan's case."

"Is it credible? He was charged with the murder, was he?"

"Yes, in common with the rest of the people of the house. The suspicion was that he had been the dupe, and had brought in the rest of his countrymen for the express purpose of being plundered. One thing saved him. It was proved that the pistol was not his, but belonged to one of the most notorious characters in the place, and as one of the plundered victims rather hesitated to swear that he saw this villain in the act of firing, the court accepted Nolan's version that he had picked up the pistol in the confusion of the moment, and let him off."

"It was a case of strong suspicion," his lordship remarked.

"So strong," answered Redgrave, "that I believed then and still believe that he was guilty; if not of the crime, at least of deceiving the fellows to the gaming-house. It is that belief that has induced me to take the step I have taken to-night. If the man is innocent, he will be able to account for the possession of the diamonds, and there will be an end of it."

"No, Redgrave, not quite an end," returned his lordship, straightening a crease in his cravat; "he'll explain, and by that means, you see, we shall get a clue to the real parties. Monstrous good idea, positively. Thought we ran some risk—false imprisonment, you know, and all that! Believe you're right, after all. Something must come of it."

Redgrave assented, and he was right.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT DID IT ALL MEAN?

Is love like this the natural lot of all?

Paracelsus.

Sigh after sigh steals from her gentle frame;
And say, that murmur, was it not his name?
She turns and thinks, and lost in wild amazement
Gazes again, and could for ever gaze!

Rogers.

Up to the moment of that interview Ormond Redgrave had never even asked himself the question whether he had acted rightly or not.

Froed, upright, conscious of rectitude, he seldom sat in judgment on his own acts. It is only adversity which teaches us to mistrust our impulses and to be anxious about the consequences of hasty actions. In that school he had as yet received few lessons. His fine nature retained all its freshness, brightness, and impulsiveness, unalloyed by any sense of self-mistrust.

Yet, as he quitted the library, some feeling of this sort might have been awakened in his mind. The room opened into the hall, from which rose a great, wide staircase of dark oak, with landings between the short flights of broad stairs at each turn in it. These led to the second floor, in which rooms had been assigned to him, and he was about to ascend, when he perceived a lady looking over the balustrade down into the hall.

This was Beatrice Ingarstone.

Up to that time they had scarcely met. He had been hurriedly introduced on his arrival on the pre-

vious evening, and had formed a passing notion that she was superbly beautiful—far more beautiful than a portrait of her which he had seen at the Academy Exhibition a few years before; but that was all.

Now her appearance struck him with singular force.

As she stood, her face came out in bright relief against the dark oak, like a painting on a panel. The sun was shining; but its light poured in, subdued through the dingy gothic windows of the hall, and seemed to make a glory about her head, which had no other adornment than a thick mass of bright hair, that lost itself in the shadow of the balustrade below her waist.

"Surely," he thought, "she is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen!"

Then he noticed—this was all in a moment—that her eyelids drooped and her face was very pale, and had an expression of intense melancholy about it.

Like a flash the cause of this suggested itself to his mind.

"She loves him—she loves the man whom I have denounced as her sister's murderer!" he mentally ejaculated.

And then it was that his breast smote him for what he had done. He hardly knew why. He had no doubt of Nolan's guilt, and no pity for him; but it seemed as if anything which could inflict pain on that lovely being must be wrong.

We know how the heart argues. How quickly it arrives at its conclusions, and how erroneous they usually are. Ormond Redgrave had a clear head and a sharp intellect, and while he trusted to either he was pretty sure to go right; but when he let his heart get the mastery of them, he was as fallacious as most of us in a similar position.

But as we have said, all this took place instantaneously. He had decided that Beatrice was beautiful, that he had wronged her, and was greatly to blame, before he had ascended to the first turn in the stairs.

There they met.

Beatrice, who had been indulging her own thoughts and had not noticed his approach, raised her face as she stood before him, and uttered an expression of surprise.

"Mr. Redgrave, I think," she asked, recovering herself.

He bowed, and replied:

"The name can scarcely be other than a painful one to you, I fear?"

"You allude to the part you took in the—the painful occurrence of last evening?" she said, very faintly.

"Yes; and for which I owe an apology, such as I can never hope to offer."

His voice was clear, but low and soft as he said this—a very different voice from that in which he usually spoke.

"I hardly know why," replied Beatrice; "you but did your duty."

"A very painful one."

"Granted," she answered. "Duties are often trials and severe ones."

He had it in his heart to say that up to that moment he had thought but lightly of what he had done; but that now he sincerely regretted it. This was the truth; but it could hardly be spoken. First, because it would have implied a knowledge of her love for Nolan, which he had no right to assume; and next, because it would have been taking an unfair advantage of the meeting to express a feeling that, fresh and newly sprung as it was, it would have been premature to express in words.

So he answered in more general terms.

"I trust," he said, "that you will do me the justice to believe that I have not wantonly given pain to any one. What I have done has been prompted by a firm conviction that the—accused was guilty; if it should turn out that he was not, if he is able to clear himself from suspicion, no one will rejoice at it more than I shall."

"I am sure of it," murmured the lady, tears welling up into her large blue eyes as she spoke.

"But this subject must be in every respect painful to you," exclaimed Redgrave, "pardon my ill-judged allusion to it, and—"

Why did he not finish the sentence and go?

It was the right thing to do, and he knew it. He was painfully conscious that he had already overstepped the bounds of good-breeding, that to detain a lady on a staircase with allusions to a painful subject was ungallant to the extreme; and yet it was so pleasant to stay, that he could not resist the temptation. On her part, Beatrice did not seem mortally offended, though she, too, had a vague notion that she ought to be; and thus it happened that when Redgrave hesitated, she came to the rescue with another remark.

"Everything in relation to the mystery of my poor sister's death has necessarily a painful interest to me," she said. "What has now happened has added

another but, wh strength though come in utter Redgra descend As soon progr As in dressing surpris Why Becat painful At an Shy, cr men of But he in an at His of ing; bu Instat placed pretensi reverie wander the ful face "Is for that of no feet too of the engage me. A that du have bu whelm cruelly Can shi One th fire up He out at distance them. "W Orm There things that of So, never the La he mig He as it class of self-co them they a flatter indee was e praise he di gurple The those pances open of gre three their entrat Sey round groon other horse whisp happy heard "Nine stood with fore. "domes "he's " "down "all."

another pang to the suffering I have already endured; but, whatever it may cost me, I trust I shall have strength to see the mystery probed to its depths, though heaven forbid that the solution of it should come in the form you anticipate."

Uttering these words, she inclined her head to Redgrave, who stepped aside, and permitted her to descend the stairs by which he had reached her. As soon as she was gone, he continued his upward progress.

He reached his room, flushed and excited. As he caught sight of his face in the glass of his dressing-room, it was absolutely scarlet, nor was this surprising, for he could feel his cheeks burn and throb.

Why? Because he had exchanged a dozen sentences of a painful nature with a woman on the stairs?

At another time he would have laughed at the idea. Shy, cowering schoolboys did that sort of thing, not men of birth and breeding. So he would have said. But he did not laugh now, nor did he regard the thing in an absurd light.

His object in going up-stairs was to dress for walking; but he did not set about it.

Instead of doing so, he threw himself on the sofa placed at the foot of the bed, as in all bedrooms of any pretensions, and gave himself up to a long, absorbing reverie. The subject of it was vague. His thoughts wandered in all directions; but it somehow happened that they always came back to one object—the beautiful face of Lady Beatrice Ingarstone.

"Is it possible that she can have any attachment for that fellow Nolan?" he asked himself. "A man of no birth, one may see at a glance. Hands and feet too large for that, and no fire in the eyes—none of the right flash. Yet they talked about their being engaged? By Jove, if she loves him she must hate me. And yet she didn't seem to. That wasn't anger that flushed her cheek when we met. She ought to have burst out into a torrent of invectives, and overwhelmed me with reproaches for having behaved so cruelly toward the man she loved. But she did not. Can she lack spirit? No, no. I'll wager my existence that, mild and saint-like as she looks, she would fire up on occasion. Then, what does it all mean?"

He rose, went to the open casement, and looked out at the faint purple hills melting away in the hazy distance—looked out at them—but scarcely noticed them.

"What does it all mean?" he repeated. Ormond Redgrave was a proud, not a vain man. There is an enormous difference between the two things. Pride is the weakness of great minds, vanity that of little ones.

So, not being vain and conceited, though proud, it never occurred to him to refer the quiet behaviour of the Lady Beatrice to any favourable impression which he might have produced on her.

He was not a lady-killer. He was as far removed as it was possible for man to be from that contemptible class of beings, who go through the world painfully self-conscious of their personal charms, who consider themselves absolutely dangerous to the weaker sex, as they are pleased to designate them, and are for ever flattering themselves upon their conquests. Conquests, indeed! As if any true woman worth the winning was ever won by such butterflies! No—heaven be praised—Redgrave was not of that order, and therefore he did not seek any solution of the difficulty which puzzled him on the score of his own merits.

The window at which he leaned—it was one of those heavily-mullioned windows, with diamond panes and swinging casements—looked down into an open space in front of the house. There was an oval of green sward, with a carriage road round it, and with three stone steps, by means of which ladies mounted their horses, immediately in front of the principal entrance to the mansion.

Several vehicles were drawn up before the house; round the oval, and on the grass itself, a knot of grooms and stable-boys stood talking of horses and other matters. People accustomed to have to do with horses always speak in loud tones—their husky whispers being generally quite audible—and thus it happened that, without listening, Ormond distinctly heard all that passed below him.

"There's all sorts of stories about it down at the Nine Elms," said a smart, forward young groom, who stood with folded arms contemplating his top-boots with intense admiration. "It seems they've met before."

"Who've met before?" asked one of the Ingarstone domestics.

"Why this fire-eating young swell and the man he's give into custody?"

"Well, and what of it?" demanded the other.

"Oh, nothing; only they do say as both have come down here after the same game."

"Eh? What's that, then?"

"Only to try and snap up your young miss, that's all."

"What! my Lady Beatrice?"

"Just so," said the groom, who had just heard these words. An indignant flush, too, crimsoned his cheeks. Coming close upon the thought he had just been indulging, this bold, coarse allusion to himself in connection with the Lady Beatrice jarred upon his feelings to an extent that he could hardly endure. He felt as a man feels who has received a blow which he is too proud to return, too hurt to endure quietly.

"Do these lackeys dare to speak thus familiarly of her?" he asked himself, quivering with resentment.

Then it seemed to him a shameful thing that he should listen to them, and while he thought this he continued to listen, quite unable to resist the temptation to hear what further they might have to say of Beatrice or of himself.

But meanwhile the conversation took a fresh turn. The subject of the late storm happened to be mentioned by one of the group of idlers, and the groom, who had before spoken struck in with a remark on one of its effects.

"They've a man at the Elms," he said, "as was struck by the lightning."

"Who is he?" inquired a listener.

"Well, that's more than they can justify make out; but he's a rum un, anyhow. He was picked up in the pine-cope, 'bout a mile down the road, late at night. They found him laying under the tree by the bridle-path. The tree was split into shivers, and all scorched and withered like, and this poor wretch—he was singed a bit, and a good deal hurt. But the worst of it was that, when he came to, his mind seemed gone, and he raved about and went on as mad as a March hare."

What Ormond had previously heard scarcely interested him more than this fresh revelation, which clearly had reference to the mysterious being he had trampled under his horse's heels in the storm.

"Did ye see him?" inquired Crofts, one of the Ingarstone bailiffs, who had joined the group.

"No; they wouldn't let anybody but the doctor into the room, because they said the man's words weren't fitten for others to hear. But one of the gals said she overheard him a talkin' about somebody as had done him a cruel wrong, and about a secret and a mystery, and 'pride having a fall,' and putting this and that together—"

Up to this point Ormond Redgrave had heard what the men had to say without deliberately listening, and so to speak, under protest; but now he could not help leaning forward, eager to catch every syllable.

He could not doubt but that the words of the raving man had reference to himself.

They were so like those he had already more than once listened to, especially in respect to the warning as to his pride, that he was intensely interested.

But his curiosity was doomed to be defeated. At the very moment that the smart groom spoke of "putting this and that together," and was about to tell what he made of it, a carriage drove up, and the conversation was broken off.

Troubled and perturbed more than he would have cared to own, Ormond remained at the window a few minutes, then came to a sudden resolve. He would go to the Nine Elms and insist on seeing the sick man, whose accident—and it was nothing more, whatever the amount of injury inflicted—he deeply regretted. It was possible, he thought, that a little care and attention might have a humanising effect on him, and that he might consent to enter into explanations, and that at all events, he, Redgrave, might ascertain who was his secret foe, and what might be the nature of that mysterious doom, of which he had more than once been warned.

Intent on this, he quitted his room and stepped as quietly as possible down the stairs and out of the house. Crofts, loitering on the hall steps, saluted him respectfully, and while returning the salute, he motioned him to follow him, and when they reached the limit of the grounds, bade him lead the way to the Nine Elms.

It was an ordinary village inn, standing back from the road, so as to have an open space devoted to three elms out of the nine, which gave this name to it, a signpost, a horse-trough, and two long seats, or settles, as the country people called them, for the convenience of weary travellers.

At that moment the seats were deserted, and the few persons who had occupied them, were gathered round a comely woman who stood in the door-way, filling it up with her ample presence, and who by the action of her hands, was expressing astonishment.

Redgrave made his way through the crowd, and addressing the woman, who received him with a curtesy, said:

"You have a sick man staying here; I wish to see him?"

"That's where it is sir," returned the landlady, "that's just who we were a-talkin' of."

"Of this sick person?"

"Yes sir." "Pray take me to him at once," said Redgrave, with a tone which implied that their conversation was quite a matter of indifference to him.

The comely woman shook her head. "It's just what I wish I could do, sir," she replied; "but the honest truth is, that whereby we left him last night a-lyin' on his bed, as nigh death we thought as any man ever was, this mornin' when we goes into the room, we finds it empty."

"The sick man gone?" asked Redgrave.

"Gone! As sure as you're standing on that stone step, sir—gone!"

"But how do you account for this?" asked Redgrave, who was rapidly yielding his mind to a superstitious dread of this singular unknown being.

"I can't account for it," returned the woman, "cept in this way, that it's just possible his intellects went again in the night, and he slipped out of the house, and is gone ravin' about the country. That's all I can suppose."

"But nothing has been seen or heard of him?"

"Nothing."

There was a troubled and perplexed expression on the face of Ormond Redgrave, as he turned from the speaker and looked into the faces of those around him, as if seeking, though hardly hoping, for a solution of the problem. In doing so his eyes rested on one face with which he was destined to become more familiar. It was that of Morris Holt,—hard, solid, and stern as usual.

"What is your opinion of this business, constable?" Redgrave asked.

"My opinion, sir?" replied Holt. "My opinion is that if he went off of his own accord, out of that sick bed—I say if he went of his own accord, sir—he must have been the old 'un himself, and no mistake about it."

Ormond Redgrave looked into the man's face with piercing eyes, an angry flush suffused his face; but he did not reply.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PARCHEMENT ENVELOPE.

Most innocent perhaps, and what if guilty?

Was it a man or fiend? What'er it was

It hath dealt wonderfully with me.

WHAT had, in the meantime, become of the accused, Andrew Nolan?

The charge hurled against him had, in the first instance, produced the effect of an unexpected blow. It had stunned him. Guilty or not guilty, such an accusation at such a moment, necessarily came upon the man like a thunderbolt. He must have been utterly unprepared for it. He could have had no idea whatever that the lady to whom he was presenting a mark of his affection, was the sister of the murdered victim from whom that object was stolen. The most fool-hardy ruffian who ever lived would not have ventured on such a piece of daring. It would have been beyond Cartouche. People, as they talked the matter over, suggested this, and were disposed to argue from it that the man was innocent; but they were met with the fact that the murder did not take place on the Ingarstone estate, but up at the Weir, a mile or two off, so that the murderer might not have known his victim. More than this, it was asked, if he was innocent, why did not Nolan explain at once how the diamond bracelet came into his possession?

There was a good deal of weight in that question.

It is a natural thing for a man found in possession of stolen goods to say at once, and without hesitation, where he obtained them.

This Nolan did not do. But from the moment that the accusation was made he asserted his innocence, and proudly refused to accept any compromise, short of actual proof of it.

Lord Ingarstone was opposed to his being absolutely given into custody. He offered him the asylum of his roof, and expressed his willingness to become security for his appearance whenever he might be called on to answer for his crime. In reply Nolan had asked:

"Shall I remain here, my lord, as a guest or as a prisoner?"

"Well—really—deuced unpleasant —," his lordship had hesitated.

"I understand!" Nolan had broken in. "You offer me a state prison. My rooms will become my dungeon. Your lackeys will mount guard over my door. Your visitors will have the privilege of flattening their noses against my windows, to catch sight of the caged monster. Thank you; but I decline. Send for a constable. Let me be treated as guilty till I am proved innocent. I prefer it."

So, at his own wish, he had been marched off to the miserable hovel to which village offenders were usually consigned.

It was a building of one floor, divided into two

partitions. In the front there was an office, used by the local constables for business purposes. The back portion presented much the appearance of a two-stalled stable. It was an apartment with walls and flooring of brick, and with two small windows crossed with iron bars. The room was divided by a rough partition into two cells—each having the advantage of a window—and as the partition was not carried up to the roof, it was convenient for prisoners to exchange information or property, and to arrange their plans for defeating the ends of justice generally.

Into one of these stalls, littered over with fresh straw, Andrew Nolan was thrust, and was left there, to pass the night—with what feelings may be imagined.

At the best it was a miserable hole, and the change from the luxuries of Ingarstone made it doubly revolting. But Nolan hardly noticed the change. He had been used to a rough, adventurous life, and that makes a man, to an extent, independent of external comforts.

But the great secret of the man's indifference lay in this, that there raged within his breast a fever of indignation which made him indifferent to surrounding objects.

Directly the door of his cell was closed upon him, and he heard the bolts shot in their rusty hasps, the young man began to pace to and fro with short sharp steps, and with a rapidity that showed how necessary mere action was to carry off the effects of mental perturbation.

"Am I an idiot? Am I a born fool?" he asked himself, speaking aloud, "that I am for ever doing these monstrous things? Or does some malignant fate pursue me? For years have I kept those diamonds in my possession, afraid to part with them or even to ask their value, and to think that when, at last, I ventured to make a present of them, it should be to the very sister of the woman they came from! Just my luck! Just the cursed fate that has pursued me from first to last!"

In his extreme vexation Nolan was moved almost to tears, and his steps became shorter and quicker.

To and fro, to and fro, he paced, like a caged leopard, his brain working, and his heart seeming to swell within his breast the while. Then he suddenly burst out again.

"My poor mother!" he cried, "it'll kill her. By one post I break to her the tale of my love and my approaching marriage, and by the next she'll hear—oh, my God! my God!—that I'm once more in prison, and a charge of murder against me! She can't bear up against it. It's impossible. Heavens, why was I born? What use have I ever been to myself or anybody about me? Since that first false step all has gone wrong. I can't get away from it. I can't go right. I'm like a limed bird: every step holds me back again. I used to laugh when they talked about gall-birds, and said that if a man once got the taint upon him he could never shake it off. I was wrong. 'Tis so: when the shadow of a prison once falls upon a man it never quits him. Never, never!"

He clutched at those bright, curling locks of his, through which the fresh, briny wind had so often played, and bringing his wrists together over his eyes dropped down into the straw, with a groan of utter despair.

There he lay for a time, moaning in bitterness of heart; then, suddenly, he sprang to his feet.

"Redgrave might have spared me," he said; "a generous man would have held his tongue and not have crushed me with that fatal remembrance. What if he did see me in the prisoner's dock at Baltimore? I was acquitted. My innocence was proved, and why should it be a stigma on a man for everlasting because he has been charged with a crime and has defeated his accusers? It is cruel, unmanly, to hunt a poor wretch down for ever and ever because he has been falsely accused of that he was innocent of. But for this man I would have defended myself. I could have told my story, and they would have believed me. I should have been free. By heaven, I will never forgive him. Never while I live!"

The more he thought over it, the stronger became his indignation. Ignorant of Ormond Redgrave's real character, he thought him cruel and unjust. It hardly occurred to him that the crime of which he was accused was so monstrous in its nature that the mere suspicion of his being the guilty party justified the extreme measures. He only felt that he was a prisoner, that his position was most critical, that upon this charge depended not only his own life, but that of his mother, who was most dear to him, and that all might have been different had Ormond Redgrave exercised a generous forbearance.

Mental anguish is exhausting, and after some hours of acute suffering, Andrew Nolan yielded to the influence of nature, and, curled up on the straw of his cell, dropped off into a restless and troubled sleep. In this the ideas which had occupied his mind took fresh forms. It was the Lady Beatrice who was exposed

to peril, who was sinking down under the gleaming blade of the assassin, and when he, Nolan, rushed forward to the rescue, but not in time to save the victim, and when he dashed the murderer to the earth, his craps mask falling disclosed the features of Ormond Redgrave.

Startled at the discovery, Nolan shrieked out and sprang to his feet.

He was awake. He knew that. More, he was conscious of being in his cell. He could see the half-moon gleaming through the barred window, and the rustle of the straw as he moved was painfully real.

How then did it happen that with this clear sense of waking reality, he had the impression that he was not alone? Was that corner behind the door empty? Did his disordered mind transform its shadows into a fantastic shape? Was it only an idea that the faint moonlight glittered upon starting eyeballs, and that the pupils of those eyes glared at him, burning and phosphorescent?

For a second he could not tell; but it was not in his brave, fearless nature to let shadows alarm him, and without flinching he thrust forth his hand.

It was clasped in a palm icy-cold, hard, and stone-like.

"Who are you?" gasped the young man.

"What does it matter?" replied a hoarse, grating voice, without ring or sweetness in it. "There's room for both."

"You've come from the other cell—is that so?" said the young sailor.

"Yes—I wanted company."

"But how did you get here? This door is locked?"

"Is it? Try!"

Nolan put forth his hand. The door was ajar.

"You see," said the intruder in a hoarse whisper,

"'twas as easy for me to come in as it would be for you to walk out,—if you cared to go."

The youth felt a glow of pleasure run through his frame at the mere suggestion. It was so glorious to be free; free as the winds and waves, free as all that had made up the joy of his roving life. He took a step forward as if about to obey the first impulse to escape, but the other raised his cold hand and pressed it against his breast.

"Not for the world," he said.

"But why not? I could be miles hence before day-break," urged Nolan, his momentary enthusiasm getting the better of his sober judgment.

"Yes," sneered the singular being at his side, "and so many miles nearer the gallows."

"How?"

"Oh, trust me," was the answer. "Ormond Redgrave would desire nothing better, than that you should fly. It needs but that to stamp your guilt. Escape from your prison, and become a fugitive hunted by the hounds of justice, and the whole world will be satisfied of your guilt."

"You are right!" sighed Nolan.

"Beatrice Ingarstone would believe it," said the stranger.

"She might."

"Nay, man, she would! And then Redgrave's path would be smooth enough."

"Redgrave's path! What mean you?" asked Nolan, with surprise.

The singular intruder burst into a low, chuckling laugh.

"Do you think he came to Ingarstone for nothing?" he asked.

"Is Lady Beatrice so poor a prize now that her dead sister's fortune is added to her own?"

"Ho, ho! You thought yourself safe in that quarter, did ye? You had no fears, no suspicions? You had never heard of Redgrave, the baronet's son, and did not know that he existed? Ho! ho! What innocence! What verdure!"

"What does all this mean?" cried Nolan. "What am I to understand by it? Do you mean to insinuate that this man Redgrave came to Ingarstone to supplant me?"

"I don't insinuate anything," was the cool reply.

"I only say that if he had met Beatrice Ingarstone before, and if he had come down to pay her his attentions, he could not have taken a better step than he has taken to clear his way."

"By heaven!" cried Nolan, who was all this while endeavouring to catch sight of his companion, but who only perceived that the man's eyes had the tiger quality of turning from black to deep orange in the dark, "if I believed that he had been animated by any such motive, I—"

"What would you do?" interposed the other, sneeringly.

"I would mark him down as my bitterest enemy," returned the youth.

"You would do well. You have no deadlier foe—what then?"

"What then?"

"Yes. You would forgive him, I suppose? That's the mild doctrine now-a-days. Men have

ceased to hate—to revenge—to do anything manly. They only—forgive!"

The insoluble scorn thrown into that one word startled Nolan; but the man's words, nevertheless, seemed to stir up all that was fierce and vindictive in his nature.

"And what if I did hate and did seek to be revenged?" he asked.

"In that case," was the whispered reply, "you have not far to seek. Hark you, Andrew Nolan, I know you, and have had my eye on you in past years. I don't care whether you did this murder or whether you didn't—"

"On my soul I did not," exclaimed the youth.

"Pshaw! Of course you'll say so," was the contemptuous answer, "people don't run their necks into halsters if a lie will save 'em. But as I've said, 'tis no concern of mine. What does concern me is this; I am old and feeble, and may die before the time comes for me to act as I would act. I know this Redgrave, and I can foresee what will happen. If he can have your life, he will. If he fails in that he'll not hesitate to do you the foulest wrong one man can do another. Now, should your life be spared, and should you be convinced of this, I think you're not the sort of man to submit to it tamely. I think not. I believe that you can hate and will have revenge."

"You have not misjudged me," interrupted Nolan fiercely.

"I'm sure I have not," said the mysterious stranger.

"And it is for that reason that I place in your hands this paper."

He drew from his bosom what appeared to be a letter, but enclosed in a parchment envelope, and handed it to Nolan.

"Now," he continued, "keep your eye on Redgrave. Watch him narrowly, and when you feel yourself most wronged, and when the thirst for revenge comes upon you most fiercely, open it; you will not need my advice what to do next."

The youth took the letter and was about to reply.

As he was in the act of doing so, he was startled by a peculiar sound, apparently that of a human being groaning in deep agony on that side of the building on which the windows looked.

Involuntarily he turned his head in that direction.

The sound was repeated.

It was followed by that of the shooting of bolts in the door of his cell.

When he cast a scrutinizing glance into the corner in which the tiger eyes had glowed, they were no longer visible. The strange being who had been conversing with him had disappeared. He stretched out his hands and pressed them against the cell-door.

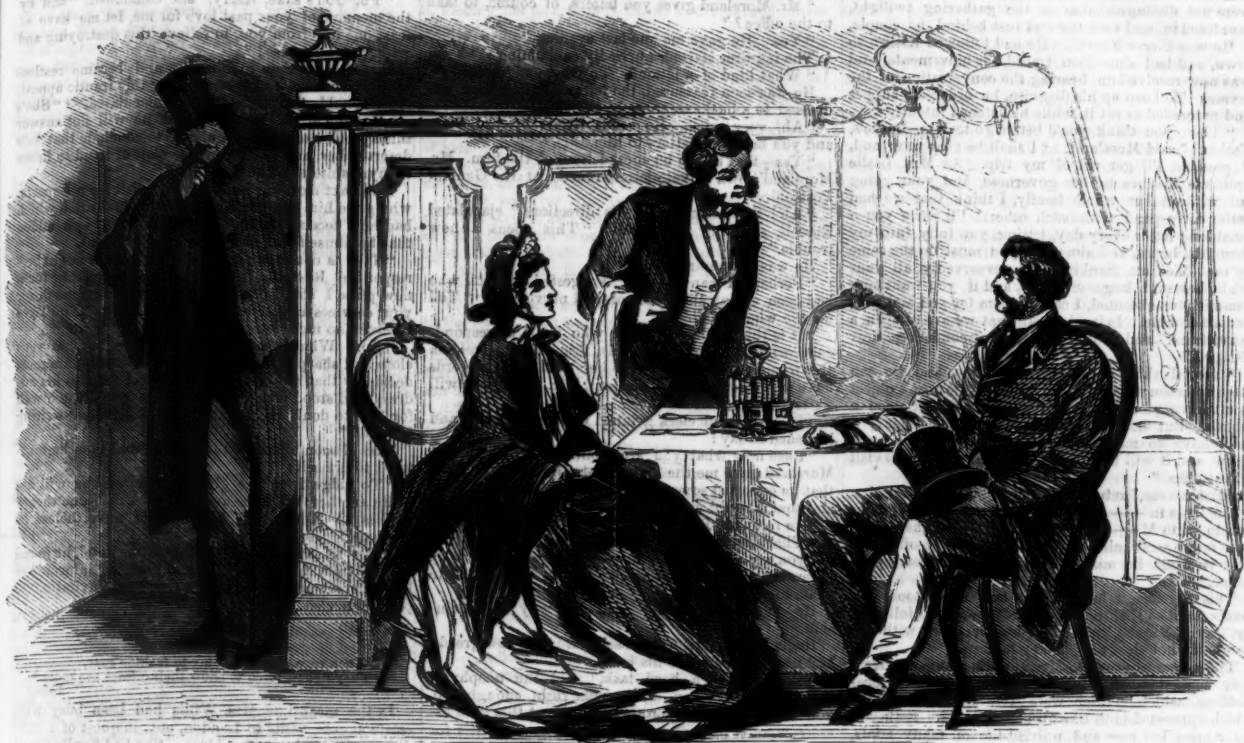
It was securely closed upon him.

(To be continued.)

It seems an odd hankering on the part of the colonials to desire a supply of frogs, but nevertheless true, as we are told that some frogs, the first imported into New Zealand, have arrived at Lyttelton in the Lady Denison. They were shipped in the condition of tadpoles, but arrived at maturity during the voyage.

THE MUSEUM OF MONARCHS.—The Emperor Napoleon III. has established at the Louvre, already so rich in curiosities and treasures of art, a Museum of Monarchs. Here will be collected all the personal memorials which can be secured of the sovereigns who have ruled over France. Among those now to be seen in this interesting collection are the following:—Arms and fragments of royal ornaments belonging to Otho; a curule chair of Dagobert; the prayer-book, sword and sceptre of Charlemagne; the breviary and baptismal vase of St. Louis; the armour worn by Francis I. on the famous field of Pavia; the prayer-book of Mary Stuart, Queen of Francis II.; the helmet and shield, splendidly inlaid, of the monster Charles IX.; the armour of Henri Quatre; the locksmith's tools of the hapless Louis XVI.; the crown worn by Napoleon I. at his coronation.

ATTACKS OF INSECTS IN SIAM.—The rainy season is drawing near, storms become more and more frequent, and the growling of the thunder is frightful. Insects are in greater numbers, and the ants, which are now looking out for a shelter, invade the dwellings, and are a perfect pest to my collections, not to speak of myself and my clothes. Several of my books and maps have been almost devoured in one night. Fortunately there are no mesquites, but to make up for this there is a small species of leech, which, when it rains, quits the streams and infests the woods, rendering an excursion there, if not impracticable, at all events very disagreeable. You have constantly to be pulling them off you by dozens, but, as some always escape observation, you are sure to return home covered with blood; often my white trousers are dyed as red as those of a French soldier.—*Mouhot's Travels in Indo-China.*



THE STEPMOTHER.

CHAPTER VIII.

Life is a voyage, and we with pain and labour
Must weather many a storm to reach the port.

Gay.

The usual din and confusion of the metropolis greeted Esther on her arrival in London, but she was spared all annoyances, her lover appearing.

"Oh, Harry!" she exclaimed, with a look of relief, "you received my telegram? Did you find me a situation, or haven't you had time?"

"I found one, dear," was the reply. "I met a lady with whom I am acquainted. We will go to her immediately, if you wish!"

"I want to call on Mrs. Manvers first," said Esther. "She thought a great deal of father, and used to pet me a good deal. Indeed I was more intimate with her daughters than with any other girls I ever knew. It would please me to keep up an intimacy with her, Harry, for she has always thought so much of me!"

"We will go to her house first then," said Moreland. "Come!"

He took the girl's hand and led her from the train to a carriage which was in waiting for him, had Esther's trunks taken up in front, and then gave the order necessary to take them to Mrs. Manvers's residence.

They drove through the park, and Esther recognized among the fashionable promenaders many old acquaintances, with whom she exchanged bows, and at length arrived at the fashionable quarter in which Mrs. Manvers was located.

"Shall I go in, darling, and tell her you are here?" asked Harry, as they halted before her door.

"Oh, no—we're such dear old friends! Come with me—you must remember her! You used to see her at our house twice a week regularly."

Moreland giving Esther's arm, ascended the stone steps. They were ushered into a splendid drawing-room, where Esther was quickly joined by a fashionably dressed woman, who welcomed her with a profusion of kisses.

"Is it possible?" she exclaimed, delightedly. "How beautiful you are grown, Essie! How glad the girls will be to see you! They are always talking about that delightful visit we paid you last summer at your lovely villa. You have come to return it now, have you not? How did you leave your father?"

"He is dead!" replied the girl, with starting tears. "He was buried yesterday!"

[MORLAND AND MISS WILLIS WATCHED BY RUSSELL.]

Mrs. Manvers expressed her grief and commiseration at the intelligence, and said:

"And so, dear Essie, you have come to visit us and fling off your grief. I am so glad that you chose us for your hostesses. We'll all help you in selecting charming mourning. I suppose your father left everything to you? I remember he was not fond of your stepmother. Ah! I see your carriage. Let me order in your baggage and then I'll call my dear girls!"

"Oh, no, I cannot stay," said Esther, pleased at her warm reception; "that is, only long enough to see Louisa and Elvira a little while. The trunks need not be taken off."

"And why not?" said Mrs. Manvers. "I protest, Mr. Moreland, I always call Essie my little nun, because she wears those lovely Quaker hues, like that grey travelling suit. Why won't you stay? You know, little nun, I shall feel so hurt if you do not."

"I cannot," said Esther, simply, "because we are to call upon a lady, with whom I hope to get a situation as governess. Now, if you'll call Louisa, Mrs. Manvers—"

"A governess?" said that lady; "what do you mean? What joke are you concocting?"

Esther explained the necessity that obliged her to earn her own living.

Mrs. Manvers' manner changed, becoming cold and frigid, and when the tale was concluded, she said:

"Excuse me, Miss Willis, while I call the girls."

She left the room, going into an adjoining apartment, and the lovers heard her saying:

"Well, girls, who do you suppose is here? Esther Willis. She's a beggar and going to be a governess. I nearly committed myself by urging her to stay here for some months, and I suppose if I had she'd have accepted it with thanks. I don't know how to get rid of her, and I suppose neither of you wish to go in and see her? People can't associate with paupers, of course?"

Harry Moreland's face flushed with indignation, and he arose, giving his arm to Esther, and leading her from the house.

"So much for fashionable friends!" he said, bitterly, as he handed her into the carriage, and gave the next order to the driver. "When we get rich, darling, we'll know how to return favours—by silent contempt!"

Esther's lips quivered, but under her lover's cheering words, she soon recovered her equanimity, and was herself by the time they reached the house they were seeking.

"The lady's name is Leslie," said Harry, as he rang

the bell. "She seems ladylike, and I hope you will like her."

The servant who answered the summons ushered them into the presence of Mrs. Leslie—a rigid and angular woman of middle age, who was immediately introduced to Esther.

"So you're the young person who wants a situation as governess?" she asked. "Can you play the piano?"

Esther bowed assent, and sat down to an instrument that stood conveniently open, giving a specimen of her musical abilities.

"Very good," commented the lady. "Do you sing?" For answer the girl sang an old English ballad, in a style that brought the tears to Harry's eyes.

"Do you speak French?" Esther assented, and stated modestly other of her accomplishments, such as drawing, as well as the English branches.

"How much pay do you expect?" then demanded Mrs. Leslie.

The girl hesitated, and Moreland said: "She teaches so many branches that her pay should be liberal."

"I always pay liberally—very liberally," was the reply. "I give one hundred pounds a year. In return, I demand faithful teaching all day for four children, in all your various branches. My governess is obliged to eat with the children. As she is neither servant nor equal, and can therefore receive visitors neither in the parlour nor the kitchen, I do not wish her to be in the habit of receiving any. And she must not go out much without the children. With these few restrictions my governess has an easy life of it. If you come at all, Miss Willis, I want you to come immediately."

Esther hesitated a moment, and then said:

"I accept the situation, Mrs. Leslie. I will come at once."

This arrangement proving satisfactory to Mrs. Leslie, the luggage was carried into the house; Harry and Esther, however, returning to the carriage.

"I feel indignant at the idea of your not being thought her equal, darling," said Harry. "I think, after all, you had better decline the situation. You don't want to be snubbed so, you know."

"I do know it," she answered. "But six months will soon pass, dear, and then we shall never, never more be parted."

The joyous light in her eyes met its counterpart in Moreland's.

They drove to a fashionable hotel, and Harry ordered a delicate repast.

He had hardly done so, when a man, strangely muffled for an October evening, and whose features were not distinguishable in the gathering twilight, sauntered in, and took the seat just behind the couple.

He was Pierre Russell. He had followed Esther to town, and had since then traced her movements, and was now resolved on hearing the conversation of the lovers. To keep up his disguise, he ordered a supper and proceeded to eat it, while he listened intently.

"Then you think you'd better go to Mrs. Leslie's, Esther?" said Moreland. "I shall be near you; and, if possible, I'll get rid of my trip. As Mrs. Leslie prohibits visitors to her governess, and your going out without her whole family, I think that we had better correspond with each other. I'll write you a good long letter every day, letting you fully into my thoughts, hopes, and aims, and you must do the same by me. Tell me, frankly and unreservedly, all your trials, however large or small, and if you want any commissions executed, I can do them for you and save you all trouble. Is it a bargain that we are to open a very frank and confidential correspondence, dear Esther?"

"Yes; I shall be so glad to do so, and we can meet sometimes, you know. Mrs. Leslie won't object to my having an evening to go out at least once a month. But how shall we address each other? I can't have so many letters come to the house, you know, and it will be equally impossible for me to visit a Post-office."

"Let me see," returned Harry, thoughtfully. "Mrs. Leslie lives in — Street, and it will not be far for you to go to M—. I will address you there, and you may send mine to the General Post-office, so that it won't be mixed with my business correspondence."

This agreement being made and understood, the lovers finished their repast and left the room, followed by Pierre Russell, who glided after them with his peculiarly noiseless and snakey motion.

The lovers returned to Mrs. Leslie's mansion. Here they separated, with many mutual looks and forebodings, which neither were able to mention, but which oppressed both like an actual dread. Esther to enter upon her new and untried life of many trials, and Harry to return to his bachelor rooms, now darker and grimmer than ever.

CHAPTER IX.

Seemingly affection doth but gild the knave
That's neither loving, honest, just, nor brave.

Waller.

Russell had followed the lovers to Esther's new home, witnessed their separation, and made a note of the addresses to which their proposed correspondence was to be sent.

When the maiden had disappeared from his view, entering the stately dwelling, he sauntered away with a very marked gratification expressed in his manner.

"The game's fairly opened," he muttered. "She'll find herself a slave—a prisoner in a gilded prison. A few weeks as governess will teach her the value of the particular sphere I have marked out for her. Of course, I shall get their letters, and it will be singular if I cannot break up their tender relations."

With a self-satisfied sneer on his handsome but wicked face, he walked slowly to his hotel. He passed half the night in musing and plotting, perfecting his plans for the morrow, and his dreams were full of triumph and success.

Early in the morning he went to the office of the firm in which Harry Moreland was a partner, and assured himself, by passing it two or three times, that no one was there except a boyish-looking clerk, who was setting things in order. The thin lips of Russell became a little more compressed than usual with energy and resolution.

Stepping into the building, he accosted the clerk with his habitual easy grace, and in ten minutes was well posted in regard to his name, position, character, and capabilities.

He was the junior clerk of the house, received only fifty pounds per annum, was dissatisfied with his pay, thought himself abused and over-taxed, had certain little weaknesses of a prodigal cast, and was altogether as plastic as dough under the influence of the genius into whose hands he had fallen.

"I see, Mr. Leperts," commented Russell, after he had looked through and through his new acquaintance "you and I ought to be better acquainted. We can be of positive service to each other. For instance, if I could speak to you in confidence—"

The neophyte protested his interest, zeal, and secrecy.

"All right," resumed Russell. "It seems that you are a sort of general messenger here; that you bring the letters of the firm from the post-office, and take letters there—in short, that you are the very man to aid me."

He drew a handful of gold from his pocket, as he continued:

"Mr. Moreland gives you letters, of course, to take to the office?"

"Yes. He gave me one last evening."

"The inquirer started, hurriedly exclaiming:

"What kind of a letter? To whom addressed?"

He was soon reassured, the letter having been addressed to a business house in the city.

"Ah, very good. He sends letters by you, then, and you bring his letters to him."

"Yes—that is, the business letters of the firm. Mr. Moreland's own private letters remain at the General Post-office."

"Ah! that accounts for his directions," ejaculated Russell, speaking to himself. "This opens a new trouble."

He was temporarily puzzled.

"Perhaps I can aid you," suggested Leperts, who had been eyeing the pieces of gold nervously. "Tell me the whole trouble."

"It is this. I have a sister who is in correspondence with a member of this firm—Mr. Moreland. Her friends are all opposed to her course, some words have passed, and I think she and Mr. Moreland will write to each other—"

The faithful clerk grinned understandingly, and listened to say:

"I see now what you are coming to. When Mr. Moreland gave me the letter last night, he told me that he expected some letters to his present address, and that I might call for them."

The relief of Russell was instant and complete.

"That's fortunate," he replied, "and I will now tell you my wishes. I want you to detain these very letters and give them to me, and these are friends to write to my sister."

He handed over the gold by way of conclusion.

He had marked Leperts closely, and seen how greedy and unscrupulous was his look.

"This is not a hard task," said the neophyte, pocketing the money. "It seems right enough, too, you being the girl's brother. Come at this time to-morrow, or a little earlier, and I will have a letter for you, if any is written!"

Russell repeated that he wanted the clerk to stop the letters addressed to Mr. Moreland, as well as those addressed to his sister. He arranged all the particulars, assured himself that Leperts would be faithful to him, gave him his address, and took his departure.

The evening of the same day, at a late hour, he had a visit from Leperts, who brought him two letters—the first two of the lovers' proposed series.

"What? two of them?" exclaimed the delighted villain—"one from each!"

The faithful clerk explained that Harry had given him a letter to take to the post-office, and that one had come for Harry through the delivery, both of which had been promptly received.

"You've done well, Leperts," said Russell, and you shall be well paid for all your troubles in this matter."

The instant Russell was alone he tore open the intercepted letters; they were full of love and devotion, and the villain bit his lips as he saw how Esther poured forth the earnestness of her nature in hers, cheering her lover, and encouraging him to wait and hope.

"I'd no idea they thought so much of each other," he muttered, when he had finished reading the letters. "And yet she is a glorious girl! How completely I am carried away with her."

He carefully stowed the letters away in an inside pocket, and rejoiced in his successes, at the same time weaving new webs for the future. As he expected, Leperts brought him two more letters the next evening, one from each of the lovers. Their tone was the same as that of those preceding, only they had not received the expected letters, and were somewhat anxious. And this order of events reigned for the next week, Russell getting all the letters and gloating over their contents. It pleased him from day to day to mark the wretchedness of the lovers, the wildness of Esther, the wonder of Harry.

At length Harry wrote that one of the partners of the firm had run away with all the money belonging to it; that the house was disgraced and beggared in consequence; and that he was now out of employment, and looking for a clerkship.

"This is glorious news!" was the comment of Russell. "The poorer he is the better. The breach is widening between them!"

He opened the letter which had been brought with the preceding—another one from Esther—and his villainous joy was complete; for in this the poor girl, giving way to the tortures of the past week, had broken down, in her beggared hopefulness, and poured forth a series of wails that would have moved a heart of stone. She had heard nothing from him; could not imagine why he had not written; had been worried and exhausted by her new duties; and had

finally conceived the horrible suspicion that her change of fortunes had changed the heart of her lover.

"For God's sake, Harry," she concluded, "and by the memory of your past love for me, let me have at least one line from you, to relieve this destroying and withering suspense!"

Russell chuckled to himself, and became restless with joyous excitement on reading this frantic appeal.

"Capital! splendid!" he ejaculated. "She's nearing the crisis. Of course, as he will not answer this appeal, she will be obliged to conclude that he's deserted her, and he's in a proper state of mind to listen to any disinterested suggestions."

The next morning he received a visit from Leperts, who gave him full particulars of the defalcation which had now become public. The faithful clerk added that he himself was now out of employment.

"That is not so much a present loss as it might be," responded Russell. "While you are looking for a new place I shall pay you three times as much for your services as you have been receiving. You have received no more letters?"

"No. What's more, Moreland has become very close and sharp in his questions. I wrote to him most decidedly that not a single letter has come to his address, and stood it out, with my former credit, too well for him to doubt me. But I hope their letter-writing is ended."

Russell soon dismissed his agent, and then he turned to himself:

"To judge from the girl's last letter, she will not write another till it is answered. The same theory applies to Moreland; but I must nevertheless be cautious."

A few minutes later, on going to the hotel, he found a note from his aunt. She had kept her informed of his whereabouts, and the note was an invitation to pay her a visit.

CHAPTER X.

When rogues from infamy to fashion roar,
They light a torch to show their crimes the more.

Young.

In the meantime Mrs. Willis had been busy with estate agents, visits to London, etc., in quest of a residence suited to her recent ideas. She had finally found a house that suited her exactly. The price of the property was rather excessive, but the owner was willing to take a mortgage for two-thirds of the purchase money, and Mrs. Willis, having negotiated some loans on her prospects, finally closed with him, and thereupon moved to London.

It will be remembered that Mr. Willis had had a fair share of friends in London, business acquaintances, etc., with whom he exchanged visits. But Mrs. Willis had never acquired any consideration amongst them, and she consequently came to the city with the intention of carving very little what they thought or said, and with a further intention of making herself the "brilliant particular star" of a new sphere. She had accordingly furnished her new house in the most luxurious style, mounted a footman behind her carriage, and in every way pursued every idea of show and ostentation that occurred to her.

Elinor had so-operated cordially with her mother in all these proceedings, and now carried her head considerably farther to the rear than at any period of her past history.

About an hour after the reception of his aunt's note, Russell ascended the steps of her new residence and rang the bell.

The door was opened by a servant in livery, who ushered him into the drawing-room where his relatives were seated in state.

The greeting he received from them was most cordial.

"Well, how do you like your new life?" he asked, with a quiet smile.

"Oh, it's delightful," rejoined his aunt. "This sense of freedom is perfectly exhilarating! At last I have the full delight of living in town, and I mean to become a leader of the ton! If Elinor was homely or a dowdy, my ambition would be in vain. But as it is, Pierre, won't she take well among these faded fashionable belles? I expect her to contract a splendid marriage!"

"I hope she will," returned Pierre. "What her face fails to do her purse may effect! Are you all settled?"

"Yes, entirely. And now, Pierre," continued his aunt, with a sort of constrained eagerness which he did not fail to notice, "as we are so rich and so fashionably established, we want you to come and live with us."

"Yes, and I want you to come, Pierre," chimed in Elinor, "to take me to the opera and the theatres. No matter how rich ladies are, they can't go to such places without a cavalier, and you are so foreign-looking, so gentlemanly, that we shall be proud of you! Do come, Pierre, and such a gay season as we will have!"

"Your arguments are irresistible," replied Russell. "Perhaps I'll come."

"I'll show you the room we had prepared for you," said Mrs. Willis, rising. "Come and see it, Pierre."

Her nephew followed her up-stairs to a large front room, furnished in elegant style, and with evident reference to his peculiar tastes. With a smile at the sudden prominence his preferences had acquired in the eyes of his relatives, Russell promised that he would go immediately for his luggage and return with it in time for lunch.

"Now, be sure, Pierre, and not disappoint us," said his aunt, as they went down-stairs. "We shall expect you without fail."

With a smile and easy bow Russell took his departure, going for his luggage, with which he soon returned in a cab. It was taken up to his room, whither his aunt followed him.

"I shall be unable to lunch with you to-day," he said. "The fact is, I promised a friend to dine with him to-day, and so shall not be back till late this evening."

"How suddenly kind they have become," he muttered. "There isn't a better room in the house than the one they've given me. There are my favourite books—that silken couch is exactly what I like—and if there is not a new pair of slippers on purpose for me! Of course, like me, they do not do things without an object, and as long as that will is in my possession, I shall be the real head of this establishment. It will doubtless be more convenient for them to examine my luggage for the will here than elsewhere, but if they do I shall know it."

He flung his coat carelessly upon his trunk, and then took a pocket-rule and carefully measured the exact distance of the sleeve from the end and sides of it. He then pulled a couple of feathers from the plump pillows and laid them at a little distance from the door, measuring accurately the distance intervening and writing it on a slip of paper which he put in his pocket.

Then leaving the room, he locked the door behind him, and sauntered down-stairs. He paused a moment on the threshold of the drawing-room.

"Don't expect me home till late. By the way, I want a latch-key."

His aunt detained him for a few moments in conversation, giving him the latch-key he demanded, and he then left the house.

"He's out of sight, mother," said Elinor, pressing her face close to the window and watching his receding form until it disappeared. "How cleverly we managed his coming. And now—"

The mother and daughter glanced significantly at each other, and Mrs. Willis responded:

"I understand you, Elinor. Pierre is safe, of course, for his interests lie with ours—but we must have the will!"

"Fifty thousand pounds is too much to pay for such a little task too," rejoined Elinor. "Let him once find that he's lost the will, and he'd be willing to take a tenth part of what he now demands."

The widow smiled approvingly on her daughter, and they hastened up to the door of Pierre's room, finding the door locked.

"This is mean," declared Elinor, "to lock up a room in our own house."

"It shows that he has something to lock up," responded Mrs. Willis. "The will is probably here."

"But how are we to get it?" said the widow, with a smile.

"I looked out for that," said the widow, with a smile. "I have two keys to each lock, and the other key to this is in my pocket."

She produced the instrument and turned the bolt of the lock, and the two women swept into the room.

"It must be in his trunk," said Elinor, hastening to it and removing the coat. "The trunk is locked, too, mother. How shall we manage that?"

"Perhaps some of my keys may fit it," said Mrs. Willis. "Trunk keys are pretty much alike. But we must be crafty, Elinor, and remember how Pierre left his things, so that he won't notice any difference when he returns."

She tried her bunch of trunk-keys, and succeeded in opening it, and then said:

"I thought I should succeed!" she exclaimed, joyfully. "And now for a careful search."

The two women proceeded to carry out their object. Every garment was rigorously searched, the breasts of Pierre's coats being particularly examined; the wadding affording such a place for concealment.

"Perhaps it's hidden in the leather somewhere," suggested Elinor.

A brief examination convinced them that such was not the case, and that the longed-for document was not among Pierre's effects.

"He must carry it on his person," at length said Mrs. Willis. "I presume he won't trust it out of his sight even for a minute. I might have known that Pierre was too cunning to leave it where any one might find it. Let's arrange the room as we found it."

They repacked the trunk, threw the coat carelessly upon it, and after a further look about the room, left it, locking the door behind them, and returned to the drawing-room.

"We are defeated this time," said Mrs. Willis hoarsely, with a look of gathering desperation in her eyes, "but we must not be discouraged. It's curious, though, the whereabouts of that will. Can it be that he has placed it in the keeping of some third party? Perhaps he has not yet brought all his baggage. Where can the will be?"

They puzzled and worried themselves vainly a few moments, and Mrs. Willis then said:

"Well, however the case stands, we must put on our best smiles, and keep our watching and searching secret. Let's now dress handsomely, and go and call upon that old nabob—the returned East Indian."

"Agreed; but is it not possible that he is married?"

"No. He says something about his widowship in the letter. It's an object of some importance, in my way of thinking, to make his acquaintance. Besides, I am all curiosity to see him. If he should be Harry's father, and if we could divide the father and son between us how capital it would be!"

"The game is certainly worth the effort," replied Elinor. "Let's hasten to get ready."

(To be continued.)

WHEN WINDS ARE LOW

WHEN winds are low upon the sea,
And moonlight dreams along the lea,
Come out, my Aveline, with me.

All things shall be a gentle nurse,
A golden crown, a perfect verse,
Unshadowed by the olden curse.

There'll be no thorns in all but love,
And over us, like a brooding dove,
Night lean divinely from above.

Oh, thus imparadised, how we
Will wish all human hearts might be
Like us in bridal ecstasy;

The Universe, one mighty rose,
In whose deep bed of sweet repose
Were lost all hates and fears and woes;

Naught felt from all below, above,
While Night leaned brooding like the dove,
But full content and love—love—love;

The love that bridal fires shrine,
The love that Friendship's flowers twine,
The crowning love for Him divine!

The winds are low upon the sea,
The moon is dreaming o'er the lea,
Then come, my Aveline, with me.

W. R. W.

ADVENTURES IN INDIA.

BY COL. WALTER R. DUNBAR.

I HAD become suddenly quite famous in Palamow. People came from all parts of the town to see the Shikaree who had faced a mad elephant, and then ridden him down and slain him. At first I did not imagine that I had done anything very wonderful; but both Darley and Nease assured me that the thing I had accomplished was truly marvellous; so I was forced to believe that I was a hero. Early on the morning succeeding the adventure the rajah came to our bungalow in person, and tried once more to purchase my horse. He possessed horses that were as fleet as was Morgan; but he declared that he had never seen a horse that combined the same amount of speed with the same massive strength. However, his mission was a fruitless one. Old Morgan and I were not to be separated yet.

After the rajah had gone we concluded that we would make another attempt for a bear-hunt; so we packed up and started, getting off about the middle of the forenoon. At the distance of fifteen miles we came to a small village, close under a range of mountains, where we learned that several bears had been committing various depredations. After dinner we had a talk with some of the natives, who offered to show us where the bears were; but Nease knew so well how to look for them that he required no assistance. The mountain jungles were not far distant, and during the afternoon we rode out, and found several caves where bears were likely to be housed.

There is but one kind of bear in India, and he is very different from any other kind of bear I have ever seen. His colour is a jetty, glossy black; and the hair very long and thick. The length of his body is about six feet, his tail being very short—never more than four inches. He has not the powerful jaws of the tiger or panther; but his claws are formidable

enough to make up for other lack, being often more than three inches long, and crooked terribly for tearing purposes. His breast, shoulders, and forearms are very massive and muscular; but he droops considerably towards the quarters, and is consequently very ungainly in his gait. He is a nocturnal beast, being very seldom found abroad in the day-time; and is never out during the hours of greatest heat unless something unusual has driven him from his retreat.

The bear will eat flesh; but still I would not call him a carnivorous animal; as I am sure he never seeks that kind of food. He is, furthermore, a very dangerous animal, killing men, women, and children who are unfortunate enough to come in his way; but he rarely, if ever, eats any of the bodies. The food which he seeks most to obtain is fruit; and he is an epicure, too. He likes the choicest kind of fruit; and hence he is a great thief. When he cannot find the mango and the mowberry in the jungle he comes to the gardens of the villagers; and it is at such times that he is dangerous; for if disturbed during his feast, he is very apt to attack the disturber; and it is hardly necessary to add that his attack is generally fatal.

In hunting the bears of India the best plan is to lie in wait near their retreat, either in the evening, or early in the morning, thus taking them as they go out or come in. Sometimes, however, especially in the cooler season, they can be driven from their haunts, and shot, at any time of day.

During the afternoon we followed Nease to the hills, where we were not long in finding the track of bears. We discovered three caves where we were sure our game was housed; and after due deliberation it was decided that we should return to the village, and wait until morning before we went at the work. We had not brought our tents with us; but we found very comfortable quarters with the natives. We were all up two hours before daylight; and having made sure that our arms were in proper condition, we set forth.

Harry and I, with my boy Dan, had selected the point where we would watch: so we made our arrangements independent of the others. About half way up the side of a steep hill we had found a deep cavern, about the mouth of which were fresh tracks of the bear. We took our positions by a clump of bushes, some two hundred yards below the den, at a point which we were confident the bear would pass. Our object in placing ourselves at this distance from the cave was two-fold. First, the ground offered a better chance for shooting; and, second, should we only wound the bear at the first shot, he could not easily escape us. Should we take position close by the cave, the game might gain the den, even after having been fatally wounded, before we could give a second charge.

It lacked about half an hour of day when we had thus encased ourselves, and ere long the stars began to pale. One after another of the celestial lamps went out, and finally the warmer tints began to appear in the east. The moments sped on, and as the morning fairly broke we feared that the bears might not be out as we had supposed.

"Or," suggested Harry, "they may have gone somewhere else."

But I did not think that probable. If the bears of India were at all like other bears they would not change their abode without good cause, especially if they had so good a retreat as the one by which we were watching. If our game had gone out, I felt sure it would return. But we were not to be much longer in doubt. Harry had just arisen for the purpose of going out where he could look further down the hill, when my Caffre boy gave us the note of warning. His quick ear had detected the approach of the game; and presently we heard a heavy, shuffling step. In a little while the bear was in sight—a huge, jetty fellow, with shoulders like an ox—making straight for the den. We had our double-barrels in our hands, and were ready for work; but it very soon struck me that we were not going to have the most favourable point for a shot. We had got to take the beast broadside to, which is not a choice position. However, we were bound to make the best of it, and as soon as the bear came opposite our cover we let drive. He gave a sudden leap, and rolled over upon his back, with all four of his feet slashing in the air.

"Zounds!" cried Harry. "I believe we've done it for him!"

I was about to commit myself to the same idea when Bruin flopped over upon his feet again, and made for his den at the top of his speed. I gave him the contents of the second barrel of my Westley as he started, and then, having taken my Antwerp rifle from Dan, and directed him to reload the double-barrel as quickly as possible, I leaped after the fleeing bear, determined that if he escaped it should be from no want of determination on my part. Harry was by my side in an instant, and as we started up the hill we heard the reports of two or three rifles from the direction of the point where Nease and Ben were

posted; but we could not stop to attend to that. Our bear was leaving us with frightful rapidity, and if he once gained his den we should surely lose him. Harry sprang ahead of me—he could run faster than I could—and gave the fellow another shot. I could not tell exactly where the ball struck, but I know that it must have hurt the brute, for he instantly turned and charged down upon us. Harry was now without a shot save such as he had in his pistols, and as he looked towards me I saw that he was anxious.

"By heavens, colonel, you must make the most of your old Antwerp!" And as he spoke he drew his hunting-knife.

The best and safest course was the boldest one. I got down upon my right knee, thus securing a good rest for my elbow, and brought my rifle quickly to my shoulder. The bear, as he now came, presented the most vulnerable point to my aim. Upon his breast was a yellowish-white mark, something in the shape of a horseshoe, reaching from the throat down to the legs, and I knew that a bullet in the centre of this mark would be fatal. A better target I could not have asked for, though it would have been very pleasant, just then, if the target could have been held still for a moment. However, I had won my game with narrower chances than that in my favour, and as soon as I found the mark over the sights of my rifle, I fired. On came the bear, with a howl that made the very rocks ring, and hastily leaping upon one side, I drew my knife, and then turned for a moment to see if Dan was coming with my double-barrel. But I did not need that weapon in the present instance. The bear was simply coming down hill because he could not help it, and when within a few yards of where we stood, he plunged forward and rolled by us end-over-end, bringing up finally against a rock, where he lay still and dead.

He was a noble fellow for one of his kind, measuring over six feet in length, independent of the tail, and girthing very near five feet around the largest part of the body. The claws of his fore-feet were a trifle over three inches long; and though they had been worn quite smooth by digging in the dirt and clambering over rocks, still they must have been terrible weapons while their owner had life and strength. A single blow of his paw would have been sufficient to kill any man.

We had commenced to take the skin from our prize, when I fancied that I heard a cry of distress not a great way off, and after listening awhile, I seized my Westley rifle, and started, Harry keeping me company. Dan wished to go, but I preferred that he should remain and skin our bear. We heard the cries for help very distinctly, and were not long in distinguishing the voice of Fitzeben. At the distance of three hundred yards, or more, we came to another bear-path, where we met Ben Gilroy.

"Hallo, colonel," he cried, "what are ye after?"

"After that poor Fitz," I answered. "I think he must be in trouble."

"Plague take him, yes!" said Ben. "We left him to keep watch by a big hole in the side of the hill, as Neafie thought it possible that a wounded bear might make off in that direction."

"And has any wounded bear gone that way?"

"Not that I know of; but we'll soon find out."

The cries of the darkey were growing more and more frantic, so we hurried on as fast as possible, for it might be that he was in extreme danger. By-and-by we came in sight of the hole which Fitzeben had been set to watch, and close by we saw a large tree, and upon one of the high branches of said tree we saw our darkey. But this was not all. In the same tree, and upon the self-same branch, was a large bear. Fitzeben had got out as far towards the end of the limb as he could, and the bear seemed to be considering whether it would be safe to follow.

"Oh—oh—oh! Mas'r Colonel! Oh, Mas'r Ben! Oh, for de Lord's sake, help! help! Don't let de b'ar git me!"

It may have been wrong to laugh, but we could not help it. A more ludicrous scene I never saw.

"Oh, for heb'n's sake, don't laff! Can't ye shoot de b'ar? Lord o' marcy! Oh, don't! don't!"

A better mark than that bear as she then sat (it was a female) could not be desired. The horse-shoe upon her breast was temptingly displayed, and Harry and I fired together. Down came the bear; and as the limb flew up from the loss of this weight, down came Fitzeben also. The bear struggled and the darkey struggled; but the darkey gained his feet, while the bear had lost the power of hers for evermore.

"What in the world were you doing up in that tree?" I asked, as soon as Fitzeben had satisfied himself that he was alive and unharmed.

"I got up dar to watch dat ar blessed hole. Good golly, I didn't 'fink noff'n 'bout de b'ar's clim'in' up arter me."

"But how did the beast happen to discover you?"

"Ah—yah! dat's jes' whar dis chile make a fool of

himself. When I seed de b'ar a coming, I hollered as loud as I could holler for somebody to cum. Ob course, de b'ar jes' disklab'd me, an' instead ob goin' into de hole, she come rite up de tree. By golly, I fo't dis nigger was a goner, suah!"

A little digging at the hole explained the matter, for we found two cubs in there. The bear had evidently fancied that the man in the tree was a little too near to her family.

However, it had not only ended in the capture of a good-sized bear and two fine cubs, but it had given us an incident for considerable sport. Fitzeben didn't hear the last of watching that hole for some time.

Our morning's sport had turned out quite profitably. Neafie and Darley had captured a rousing old bear at their stand; Harry and I had taken ours; and here were Mother Bruin and her two cubs to be added.

Should we now return to Palamow, or should we stop and take another turn in the mountains?

We decided to stop.

ALL ALONE.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "Self-Made," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.

Metamorphosed with a mistress.—*Shakespeare.*

At Basil's cry of anguish Helen came running to the spot where, senseless and bleeding, lay the inanimate form of poor Theodora.

"She's dead!"

"Nonsense! Can't you see she breathes?"

"No, no! She's dead, and it is I who have killed her!"

"Out of the way!" said Helen, scornfully, pushing her brother aside without ceremony. "You are not fit to attend upon her."

In that speech Helen spoke the truth.

Poor Basil, with his clumsy, blundering affection, was likely to do far more harm than good.

"Now, Basil, get some water."

"Where from?"

"Anywhere, as long as you are quick about it."

Basil still lingered.

He could not withdraw his gaze from what he firmly believed to be the lifeless body of her he loved so well.

Helen stamped her pretty little foot and reiterated her request.

Basil hastened away to fulfil orders.

Helen had trained him well.

It was but seldom he hesitated, even for a moment, in obeying his sister's commands.

Speedily he returned, bringing in his cap as much water as it would hold.

With the liquid thus obtained Helen besprinkled Theodora's face plentifully.

For the next few minutes Helen and her brother watched impatiently.

The poor sufferer showed no sign of returning consciousness.

A pause.

Then a deep inward respiration.

A sigh.

A low moan of pain.

Then Theodora slowly unclosed her eyes.

"Thank heaven!" cried Basil, fervently.

"Where am I? How did I come here?" asked Theodora.

As she said this she essayed to rise.

The next instant she sank back with a moan of pain upon her rocky couch.

"Her leg is broken," said Helen.

She spoke quietly to her brother, hoping the example of her calmness might have its effect upon him. She was disappointed.

He broke forth into loud and vigorous lamentations. In no mild language she bade him cease.

"Exercise your arms and not your voice," said she, angrily.

"What am I to do?"

"Can't you see?"

"No."

As Basil answered in the negative, he looked straight up at the clouds as if they would give him the desired information.

"Basil!"

"What is it?"

"Do you mean to leave this girl lying here all night?"

"Of course not."

"How are you going to remove her?"

"Ah!"

As Basil made this sapient answer, he lifted up his cap and ran his red hand through his redder stubble which did duty for hair.

"Idiot!" exclaimed Helen, thoroughly angered at her brother's stupidity. "You must carry her."

"I?"

"Yes. Do you think I can do it?"

"No."

"Who else is there, then?"

Basil pondered before he replied:

"Nobody."

"Come, then. Be quick, or we shall be benighted on the mountains."

Without another word, Basil raised her he loved so well in his arms.

The feeling of joy caused by holding her so close to him almost made him forget the dangerous duty assigned to him.

In gazing at Theodora's face he forgot to look forward.

He slipped his foot.

He stumbled forward.

A moan broke from the lips of the poor girl who lay so passively in his arms.

A sharp rebuke from Helen made him attend more to his footing.

After more than an hour's work they reached the bottom.

Basil had accomplished a task which few but himself would have dared to undertake.

He had descended the steepest side of the mountain bearing Theodora in his arms.

Scarcely a jolt or a jerk had occurred in the whole descent to shock the injured girl's nerves.

With more care and tenderness than one would have thought him capable of he had safely borne her to the level ground.

Now the road lay straight before them, and presented no difficulties.

Ere they had gone far, however, they overtook a cart on its way to Rendson.

Into this Theodora was placed.

Helen and her brother made as soft a couch as possible for her with their spare articles of dress.

Thus the sad procession moved along at a foot-pace till the walls of Denby House came in sight.

Basil was despatched to the house to warn the servants of the accident, and to bid them prepare a bed for the poor girl.

Another servant was despatched on horseback over to Rendson for the doctor.

Helen attended upon her friend with the greatest care and kindness.

Poor Basil paced moodily up and down the garden, waiting for the arrival of the doctor.

The moments of anxiety he passed till he came were almost unbearable, but the succeeding ones during which he waited to hear his verdict, were still greater agony.

At last Helen appeared.

Slowly and sorrowfully she came towards him.

"Will she live?" he asked, eagerly.

"Yes."

"Hurrah!"

He gave a wild shout.

A shout of joy and gladness.

"Hush! Is that the noise to make beneath the windows of a sick-room?"

Basil was silent on the instant.

"What is the matter with her?" he asked, in a low whisper.

"Her leg is broken."

"Will she get well?"

"The doctor says so."

"But will she recover the use of her leg?"

Helen shook her head sadly.

"What do you mean, Nell?"

She did not answer.

"Speak, Nell; let me know the worst."

"The doctor says she will be a cripple for life."

With a wild, gasping sob, Basil buried his head in his hands and wept aloud.

"I have done it all," he sobbed; "I have done it."

"Come home now, Basil dear," said Helen, in a kinder tone than she generally employed in addressing her brother.

Mechanically he followed her.

The whole distance to Red Ridge he did not trust himself to speak a single word.

She strode on in silence.

Helen did not interrupt his train of thought.

Weeks passed by and Theodora got gradually stronger, but the doctor's fear seemed likely to be confirmed.

She was a cripple!

Day by day Basil rode over to Denby House to make inquiries after the poor invalid.

Each time he left a few flowers, or some such token, for her, and Theo valued them, though not exactly in the way that Basil hoped she might.

"I tell you what, Basil," said Helen one day, "you must propose at once to Theo."

"But she is hardly out of her room yet."

"So much the better."

"But Dr. and Mrs. Throgmorton have come home?"

"Well?"

"I—I don't exactly care to talk to Theo before them."

"Of course not."

"How am I to avoid it?"

"By asking to see her alone."

"Alone?"

"Yes."

"I can't do it."

"Then you must give her up altogether."

"I can't do that either."

"Well, go your own way; I can't help you."

The end of the discussion was that Helen gained her point as usual.

Basil started early the next morning for Denby House.

Arrived there, he asked the pompous, well-to-do footman for Theodora.

"I will tell the ladies, sir," said the gorgeous creature.

"No," faltered Basil, "only Miss Theodora."

And while the servant was gone to do his bidding, Basil waited, thinking the minutes hours, and wondering at the unusual length of the twilight.

And yet, at last, Theodora entered too soon for his composure.

He must have lost his self-possession in overpowering nervousness, but that when his eyes fell upon the figure of his little lady-love, her delicate spiritual beauty, and fluttering crippled movement toward him, made him utterly forget himself and think only of her, and drew out his whole heart toward her in the tenderest compassion, with the yearning desire to shield and defend her from all possible harm; and with the wish to surround her with such care and comfort as only such deep and pure affection as that which burned within his own heart for her could supply.

As he went to meet her, this warm, pure, unselfish love gave something of grace to the awkward, ungainly form, and somewhat of melody to the coarse, rough voice, and some degree of free utterance to the hesitating mind.

He led her to a seat, and stood half-embracing the chair on which she rested, and asked when Dr. Throgmorton thought of leaving.

She answered:

"On Wednesday week."

"And are you going with them, Dora?"

"I do not know. Nothing has been said about it."

"Oh, do not think of going, Dora. You never could bear either the long journey or the life in that country. I came here this evening on purpose to beseech you not to think of going."

"Why, Basil?"

But he had sunk down by her side, as if, however, without the least diminution of tender reverence, to draw nearer to her; and half kneeling, and half embracing the chair that held her, with the natural eloquence that deep, strong, earnest, fervent feeling lends the most untutored nature, he poured forth the history of his love.

He told her that before he had known her, he had never loved, and scarcely indeed had lived.

That his life had been a mere round of work, food, and sleep; and not much higher than that of the oxen that ploughed his fields.

She, he said, had awakened his heart and his brain.

She had quickened a host of beautiful thoughts and affections, that all turned to her as their inspirer and their object.

The instructions of Helen; as to the mode of courtship, were quite forgotten.

All art was forgotten.

Pure affection only was remembered.

Truth and nature only expressed.

Theodora heard him in silence, but with deep emotion.

Every glowing word he breathed revealed also to her the hidden yearning of her own heart toward another.

It was true that for that other she could never be anything dearer than the little friend and protégée; yet at least she must never hold a nearer relation than that to any one.

But from the depths of her gentle heart, she compassionated the disinterested lover, whom she must soon dismiss to leave her presence, taking disappointment with him.

Yet how should she speak the words that must give such great pain to one, who, perhaps, loved her more than did any other in the whole world.

She could find no language gentle, and grateful and soothing enough in which to couch her rejection.

She dropped her head upon her bosom.

She covered her face with her hands.

But that did not prevent the tears revealing themselves by stealing through her fingers.

Basil felt encouraged by her gentle emotion, and essayed to remove her hands.

But, immediately and voluntarily dropping them, she said:

"Dear Basil, I always loved you like a dear brother and always shall. Please try to forget that you ever thought of me in any other light, and I shall forget what you have said."

There was a pause, interrupted at length by Basil, who, in a choking voice, faltered:

"Do you mean, Theodora, that I have no hope—no hope of—"

"Yes, dear Basil, that is what I mean. I shall never change my name, Basil, as it is not right indeed that I ever should."

"Why? dearest Dora, why?"

Theodora raised her eyes in one expressive, mournful glance, that said more eloquently than words could have spoken.

"Out of my studio I am quite helpless," and dropped them again.

Basil understood, and hastened to assure her earnestly, fervently, that her helplessness did but bind him closer to her service, that all he wished to live for was to promote her comfort and happiness.

He was going on in the same strain, when Theodora gently raised her hand and stopped him.

"Don't, dear Basil. You cannot immolate your life upon that of a poor invalid like me. No, be silent! I only weep because I must say no; but though it is said painfully, falteringly, believe me it is a decision irrevocable as if it were sternly sworn. Let us forget what has been said, and be brother and sister as before."

"Good bye! God bless you, Theodora! As to our being brother and sister as before—I shall never see your sweet face again. And—and he who cannot love you better, may have better success—but—in any event—God for ever bless you!"

CHAPTER XV.

CONSPIRACIES.

With a little hoard of maxims
Preaching down her daughter's heart.

Tennyson.

To say that Basil was surprised at the answer Theodora gave him would hardly be correct.

He was cast down—crushed—heart-broken.

He would almost as soon have thought of running away with her as of presuming to repeat his offer.

She had refused him: he was rejected.

The cup of happiness which his sister had raised to his lips, Theodora had dashed to the ground.

For a few minutes he stood staring blankly at the face of poor Theo.

Its expression was full of pity, but still he saw nothing there to justify him in hoping that he might one day receive a more favourable answer.

Basil raised Theodora's hand respectfully to his lips.

"Good bye, dear!" he murmured.

"Heaven bless you, Basil!" answered Theo, in a faltering voice.

Basil went slowly as far as the door.

Then, as if acting upon some sudden impulse, he ran back.

Again he took that small, thin, delicate white hand in his.

Again he pressed her hand and was gone.

Gone from the house he had entered so full of joyous hope.

Gone, crushed and heart-broken.

Mounting his horse he galloped rapidly home.

At the door stood Helen waiting to learn the result of his mission.

He saw her and dreaded the interview.

"Rejected!" he exclaimed in a desponding tone.

"Rejected?"

"Yes."

"I'll warrant it's not much of a rejection, after all," said Nelly.

"Come in and tell me all about it,"

Basil left his horse to the care of the groom and followed his sister into the parlour.

He threw himself wearily on a low chair, and, in a broken disjointed style, related what had passed at the interview.

"Nonsense! Don't you see she's only half in earnest?" said Helen, when the narration was ended.

"You must try again."

"No—no."

"Why not?"

"I have bidden her good-bye for ever. I dare not speak to her on the subject again."

"You need not speak to her," said Helen, emphatically.

"I do not understand you. To whom should I speak?"

"Her aunt."

"What! Mrs. Throgmorton?"

"Yes."

"Helen, if you think I could do anything dishonourable to gain little Theo, you are mistaken."

"Dishonourable! What fancies the boy takes in his head!"

"If the poor little thing can't like such a great grumbling brute as me, she can't, and there's an end of it."

"You don't understand girls' ways."

"Maybe I don't; but I'd sooner cut my tongue out than speak a word to give her annoyance."

"Did you expect her to fly to your arms, just because you held them open, Basil?"

"No; but—"

"Never mind your 'buts'; do as I tell you."

"What is that?"

"Get Mrs. Throgmorton to plead your cause with Theodora."

"I'll do nothing of the sort."

"Are you mad?"

"I am sane enough to refuse to do aught dishonourable."

For a few minutes Helen remained silent.

She was taken aback by this resolution of her brother's.

It was not often that he presumed to have a will of his own; but she saw that on this point he had quite made up his mind.

Still she did not despair.

It was necessary for her that Theodora should be removed from her way, and her marriage was the easiest and most harmless way by which she could hope to accomplish her purpose.

If the reader has interpreted the character of Helen Wyld right, he will see that she was not naturally inclined to evil, but that her selfishness was no great thing when she set her mind upon a certain object, she made everything else give way before it.

She had determined to marry Austin Denby, and to bring that about she did not scruple to sacrifice her friend's happiness.

That Theodora was against the match she could no longer doubt.

At first she might have given up her schemes on ascertaining this, but now she had thought and dreamt of them too long to be willing to abandon them without a struggle.

Again and again she renewed her attack upon Basil.

He was totally incapable of coping with her in argument.

By her smooth words she made things appear in whatever light she was minded.

At last Basil gave way.

"Remember, Nell!" said he "I would not have my darling Theo forced in her inclinations for the world."

"Of course not."

"If she will alter her mind and accept me as a husband, I shall be the happiest fellow in the world. If not—"

"Well—what then?"

"Then our paths in life must lie wide apart."

"Courage, Basil! I will do the best I can for you."

"Oh Nell! If you can only succeed in gaining her for me I shall say you are the best little sister a man ever had."

A smile of satisfaction passed over Helen's face at finding she had, at last, overcome the scruples of her brother Basil.

The next morning Helen Wyld went over to Denby House.

Arrived there, she asked to see Mrs. Throgmorton alone.

That lady was engaged in preparing for her departure, and, with some surprise and impatience at the interruption, and perplexed conjecture as to its cause, left her work and went into the parlour to receive her visitor.

Helen had come upon an errand which would have confused almost any visitor but herself.

But bashfulness was not her weakness.

Smiling gladly, she advanced to greet the lady in whose house she was, without a shade of embarrassment on her face.

When that ceremony was over she rushed at once into the subject which had brought her to Denby House.

"Mrs. Throgmorton, I have come courting," she said.

"Courting!—Miss Wyld?"

"Yes. A curious errand for a young lady, considering it is not leap-year."

"You are incomprehensible, Miss Wyld."

"And you are curious, Mrs. Throgmorton."

"I am busy," answered that lady, in a tone of much meaning.

"I know it, and will therefore take as little of your time as possible."

"Tell me the nature of your errand, for your words hitherto, have been riddles."

"Well, then, I have come to endeavour to persuade you to use your influence with Theodora."

"Theodora?"

"Yes. On behalf of my poor, love-sick, broken-hearted brother Basil," said Helen, laughing.

"What can I do?"

"You can use your influence."

"How far has this matter proceeded?"

"To the awful crisis of a rejection."

"Theodora has rejected your brother?"

"Precisely. He proposed and was refused."

"And is he seriously disappointed?"

"Driven to the verge of madness."

"Helen, be serious—I can never understand you. Are you really in earnest or is it but a jest?"

"I am solemnly in earnest," said Helen, gravely.

"Basil should have spoken to me first," said Mrs. Throgmorton severely.

For several minutes she remained in a pensive attitude.

Helen kept her seat, betraying no outward concern in the matter beyond fidgeting with the handle of her parasol.

After a lengthened pause, she again addressed Mrs. Throgmorton.

"What answer may I take back to my love-sick brother?"

"Tell him," said Mrs. Throgmorton, slowly and with deliberation, as if weighing every word before giving it utterance—"tell him from me, Helen, to try again, and—and I will promise him a more favourable answer."

It was not without thought that Mrs. Throgmorton made this reply.

She well considered each side of the question before answering.

Theodora was a weight and burthen on her hands of which she would gladly rid herself.

Her niece had no claim upon her, and only interfered with her plans.

If she could be married, all cause of disquietude on her account would then be at an end.

She would be off her hands then, and provided for for life.

"Still," Mrs. Throgmorton could not but acknowledge that Basil was hardly a man with whom a young girl of Theodora's temperament would readily fall in love.

But on this account she did not hesitate.

She did not know herself what true love was.

She was a thoroughly worldly woman.

Basil was tolerably well-to-do.

He was staid, sober, and respectable.

Mrs. Throgmorton saw no reason why Theodora should not be happy with him, and, accordingly, she gave Helen the answer which sent her back to Red Ridge pleased and happy to communicate the result of her mission to her expectant brother.

In relating the events of the interview to him, though not guilty of falsehood, Nelly altered and changed the bearings of one or two points.

The effect of this was to make Basil believe that Theodora herself had been consulted in the matter, and was not unwilling to reconsider her determination.

Leaving Basil to howl and jump with delight, and Helen to ponder over the probable success of her plans, let us return to Denby House, and see how Mrs. Throgmorton prospered in her interview with her niece.

Theodora was painting in her room.

So absorbed was she in her employment, that she never heeded her aunt's entrance.

She was still employed upon the portrait of Austin Denby.

Mrs. Throgmorton laid her hand gently on the girl's shoulder.

"Theo!"

Theodora turned round with a start.

When she saw who her visitor was, she was greatly surprised.

Mrs. Throgmorton had hardly ever entered the room before.

She felt that it must be something important which could bring her aunt from her own sumptuously furnished apartment to the little attic.

"Theo!"

"Aunt!"

"I want to have a little conversation with you, Theo."

Theodora, wondering, placed a chair for her aunt, and stood by her side waiting for her to begin.

"It is a subject of no small importance, Theo, upon which I wish to speak to you."

"What is it, aunt?"

"One that affects all your future life."

Theodora turned pale and trembled.

She felt her aunt referred to her marriage.

There was but one person in the world whom she was willing to marry.

That one was far, far away in distant lands.

Besides, as she thought, would never stoop to wed one so plain, so humble, and so lowly born.

"Theodora, why did you not tell me of what happened a few days ago?"

"To what do you refer, aunt?" she faltered.

"Did you not receive an offer of marriage, from Basil Wyld?"

"Yes, aunt."

Theodora hung her head as she answered.

"You accepted him, of course?"

"This was a bit of generalship on the part of Mrs. Throgmorton."

She did not wish to reveal all she knew.

"You accepted him, of course?"

She repeated these words, for Theodora made no reply.

"Speak, child. You don't mean to tell me you were mad enough to refuse him?"

"I could never marry him, aunt."

"Why not?"

"Oh, don't ask me—pray don't ask me!"

"Theodora, I must speak to you in a way that is extremely painful to me. Have you ever considered that you are altogether a considerable expense to your uncle?"

This was not the fact.

Theodora had less care and less money spent upon her than one of the doctor's horses.

"Yes, aunt," faltered Theo.

"You know, too, that you have no manner of claim upon him?"

"Yes, aunt."

This time she spoke even more faintly than before.

"Then, Theo, does it not appear to you that you do wrong in hesitating to accept an offer which will make you independent for the rest of your days?"

"But, aunt—"

"Well!"

"I cannot love Basil Wyld."

"Pshaw! What has that to do with it?"

Love certainly did not count for much with Mrs. Throgmorton, but with Theodora it was very different.

Her nature and her aunt's were totally antagonistic.

They had not a single feeling in common.

"There is no reason why you should hate Basil, I am sure."

"Oh, no!"

"You do not dislike him?"

"I do not like him enough to be his wife."

"That is not the question. Of course, Theo, I have no power over you—I do not command you to wed Basil Wyld, but I think it my duty to persuade you to become his wife."

"But you would not wish me to marry a man I did not love?"

"Nonsense, child. You do not dislike him."

"No, but—"

"Love will come after marriage."

"That is a dangerous experiment."

"Not at all. I speak from experience."

This was strictly true, but then Mrs. Throgmorton made no allowance for the difference of temperament between herself and her niece.

Theodora was abashed and cast down.

She knew not what to say.

Hers was a most sensitive nature, and she felt more deeply than words can express what her aunt said about relieving her and her husband of a burthen.

Mrs. Throgmorton fired her last shot.

"Theo, if, as I fancy, you have ever nourished an attachment for Austin Denby, you have done very wrong."

Theodora blushed deeply.

Her secret was discovered.

"Very wrong, Theo; for such an attachment can bring nothing but sorrow and misery. His marrying you is out of the question."

"Ah, yes."

"Do not let any romantic girlish fancy cause you to refuse a good offer."

Theodora did not reply.

"Basil loves you truly and well."

"I know it."

"Then why do you hesitate?"

"Oh, aunt! leave me—leave me! I cannot consent to impel my own happiness and that of Basil Wyld by consenting to become his wife."

"Nonsense."

"Indeed I cannot."

"But you will think over what I have said?"

"That I cannot help, but I do not think anything will make me alter my determination."

"Do not say that, Theo. Reflection will show you how much better it will be for you."

Theodora shook her head.

"Well, Theo, I will leave you alone to decide upon this important step. You must see which way your duty points."

As she said this, Mrs. Throgmorton left the room.

The door had scarcely closed behind her when

Theodora flung herself weeping upon a couch, sobbing as if her poor little heart would break.

Ten minutes later a mounted messenger was sent in all haste over to Red Ridge farm.

He was the bearer of a note to Helen Wyld from Mrs. Throgmorton.

It contained but a few words.

"Theodora has consented to reconsider her answer to Basil!"

That was all it said, but those few words were sufficient to fill the hearts of two people with joy.

Basil and Helen, though actuated by different motives, were both equally delighted.

Poor Basil! poor blid Basil!

Little did he dream what future misery was in store for him!

Alas! he was, however, soon doomed to know the truth.

Soon must he awake from the silly dream of love which now occupied his mind.

That night, in Mrs. Throgmorton's house, two women meditated long and deeply.

One was the unhappy girl about to be forced into a distasteful union.

The other, the crafty, scheming doctor's wife.

The former, alone in her chamber, crouched upon the floor, with pale face, and dishevelled tresses streaming down her bare, white shoulders.

She, burying her face in her hands and her cloud of hair, moaned bitterly:

"Oh, misery! misery! misery!"

Long she knelt thus, bowed down by the weight of her great grief.

Then she slowly arose and brushed back her hair from her smooth white forehead, then looking around and listening intently, stole on tip-toe towards the door.

She opened it very carefully, so as to avoid the slightest sound.

All in the house was still.

Probably the inmates slept, unmindful of her misery.

She came back into the room in a tremble, but with a determined face.

Upon the perpetration of what desperate deed could this gentle creature be determined?

The house was dark and silent.

She was unwatched.

Returning to her room on tip-toe, she approached a wardrobe, from which she took out a small medicine-chest, and from this selected a tiny phial.

The light of the night-lamp fell upon it as she held it in her trembling hand.

It contained a colourless liquid, and was labelled "POISON."

(To be continued.)

THE BIG TREES OF CALIFORNIA.

TAKE the dry statistics of the matter. Out of one hundred and thirty-two trees which have been measured, not one underruns twenty-eight feet in circumference; five range between thirty-two and thirty-six feet; fifty-eight between forty and fifty feet; thirty-four between fifty and sixty; fourteen between sixty and seventy; thirteen between seventy and eighty; two between eighty and ninety; two between ninety and one hundred; two are just one hundred; and one is one hundred and two.

This last, before the storms truncated it, had a height of four hundred feet. I found a rough ladder laid against its trunk—for it is prostrate—and climbed upon its side by that and steps out in the bark.

I mounted the swell of the trunk to the butt and there made the measurement which ascertained its diameter as thirty-four feet—its circumference one hundred and two feet plus fraction. Of course the thickness of its bark is various, but I cut off some of it to a foot in depth, and there was evidently more below that.

To make some rough attempt at a conception of what these figures amount to, suppose the tree fallen at the gable of an ordinary two-story house. You propose to cross by a plank laid from your roof to the upper side of the tree. That plank would perceptibly slope up from your roof-peak.

Through another tree, lying prostrate also, and hollow from end to end, our whole cavalcade charged at the full trot for a distance of one hundred and fifty feet. The entire length of this tree before truncation had been about three hundred and fifty feet.

In the hollow bases of trees still standing we easily sheltered ourselves and horses. We tried throwing to the top of some of them with ridiculous success, and finally came to the monarch of them all, a glorious monster not included in the above table of dimensions, as most of those mentioned are still living, and all have the bark upon them still, while the tree is to some extent backed and charred. When it stood erect in its live wrappings, it measured forty feet in

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diameter—over one hundred and twenty in circumference!

Estimates, grounded on the well-known principle of yearly cortical increase, indisputably throw back the birth of these largest giants as far as 1200 B.C. Thus their tender saplings were running up just as the gates of Troy were tumbling down, and some of them had fulfilled the lifetime of the late Harford Charter-Oak when Solomon called his master-masons to refreshment from the building of the Temple.

We cannot realise time-images as we can those of space by a reference to dimensions within experience, so that the age of these marvellous trees still remains to me an incomprehensible fact, though with my mind's eye I continue to see how mountain-massy they look, and how dwarfed is the man who leans against them.

THE INFLUENCE OF WOMEN UPON SOCIETY.

"The boy is father of the man," the girl is likewise mother to the woman; and the woman—oh, solemn thought, laden with awful responsibility to each tiny maiden-child that coos and crows at us from her innocent cradle!—the woman is the mother of us all.

Far deeper and higher than the advocates of woman's rights are aware of, lies the truth that women are the heart of the world. From a gynocracy or even a self-existent, self-protecting, and self-dependent rule, heaven save us, and other Christian communities! but the fact remains, that on the women of a nation does its virtue, strength, nobility, and even its vitality, rest.

Sparta recognized this in a rough barbaric way. Judaea, too, when through successive ages every daughter of Abraham was brought up to long for offspring, in the hope that of her might be born the Messiah, the promised Seed.

All history, carefully examined, would, we believe, exemplify the same truth—that the rise and fall of nations is mainly dependent on the condition of their women—the mothers, sisters, daughters, wives—who consciously or unconsciously mould, and will mould for ever, the nature, habits, and lives of the men to whom they belong.

Nay, even in modern times, in looking around upon divers foreign countries—but stay, we will not judge our neighbours, we will only judge ourselves.

If things be so, if the influence of women be so great, so inevitable, either for good or for evil, does it not behoove us, who live in a generation where so many strange conflicts are raging on the surface of society, so many new elements stirring and seething underneath it—does it not behoove us, I say, to look a little more closely after our "girls?"

It is rather difficult now-a-days to find a "girl" at all. They are, every one of them, "young ladies." There is a painful uniformity, too, in them and their doings—their walking, talking, singing, dancing, veils all after the same pattern, done to order according to the same inflexible rule—"What will Mrs. Grundy say?"

An original natural "girl," who has grown up after her fashion, and never heard of Mrs. Grundy, is a creature so rare, that when we find her, at any age from twelve to twenty, we are prone to fall right over her head and ears in love with her, carry her off, and marry her immediately.

And we hardly wonder that so many of the rapid, common-place, well-dressed, well-mannered young ladies remain unmarried, or rush into the opposite extreme of frantic independence, and try to create an impossible Utopia, of which the chief characteristic seems to be that of the heaven of Crazy Jane in the ballad—

"With not a man to meet us there."

Which is most harmful, this foolish spying of men's manners, habits, and costumes, or the frivolous laxness, the worse than womanish insanity, which wastes a whole precious lifetime over the set of its hoops, the fashion of its bonnets, or the gossip of its morning callers, let wiser heads than the present writer's decide. Between the two opposite evils, most welcome is anything, or anybody, that indicates what a girl really is, and ought to be; thus giving us some hope for the women that are to come, the mothers of the next generation.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

LAST LETTER OF THE UNHAPPY QUEEN CAROLINE MATILDA OF DENMARK, TO HER BROTHER, GEORGE III.—"Sir,—In the most solemn hour of my life I turn to you, my royal brother, to express my heart's thanks for all the kindness you have shown me during my whole life, and especially in my misfortune. I die willingly, for nothing holds me back—neither my youth nor the pleasures which might await me, near or remote. How could life possess any charms for me, who am separated from all those I love—my husband, my children, and my relatives? I, who am myself a queen and of royal

blood, have lived the most wretched life, and stand before the world an example that neither crown nor sceptre affords any protection against misfortune! But I die innocent—I write this with a trembling hand, and feeling death imminent—I am innocent! Oh, that it might please the Almighty to convince the world after my death that I did not deserve any of the frightful accusations, by which the calumnies of my enemies stained my character, wounded my heart, traduced my honour, and trampled on my dignity! Sire, believe your dying sister, a queen, and even more, a Christian, who would gaze with terror on the other world if her last confession were a falsehood. I die willingly; for the unhappy bless the tomb. But more than all else, and even than death, it pains me that not one of all those whom I loved in life is standing by my dying bed, to grant me a last consolation by a pressure of the hand, or a glance of compassion, and to close my eyes in death. Still, I am not alone: God, the sole witness of my innocence, is looking down on my bed of agony, which causes me such sufferings. My guardian angel is hovering over me, and will soon guide me to the spot where I shall be able to pray for my friends, and also for my persecutors. Farewell, then my royal brother! May heaven bless you, my husband, my children, England, Denmark, and the whole world! Permit my corpse to rest in the grave of my ancestors, and now the last, unexpressed, long farewell from your unfortunate Caroline Matilda."—*From Mrs. Louisa Wrazzall's Life of the Queen.*

REGINA TRAVERS.

A DAY and gallant Frenchman has said, "that he who would describe the fair sex, must dip his pen in the colours of the rainbow, and throw upon his paper the powder taken from the wings of a butterfly." How, then, can I describe the paragon of her sex, the lovely Regina Travers? What language sufficiently beautiful to describe her beauty—sufficiently graceful to describe her grace? She is the exquisite embodiment of the poet's brightest dream. A form tall, undulating, and most ravely developed; a head like the Ephesian Diana, a neck, whose snowy whiteness and delicate shape resembled that of the beautiful and unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots; cheeks in which the lily and the rose strove for mastery; a glance from her eyes, of heaven's delicious blue, would have melted the heart of Diogenes; a smile from her coral lips would have softened stern old Cato.

My feeble language gives but a faint idea of the beauty of Regina Travers' wondrous charms. It would require the pencil of Raphael to do justice to her incomparable beauty.

When I first saw this lovely woman, I never had seen, never had I expected to see, such perfection upon this earth.

For some time I was destined to remain but a distant admirer of this queen of my heart. I had seen her frequently at church and in the street, and was deeply affected by her surpassing beauty. Each time I saw her my interest increased, until I had almost fallen in love without knowing the object of my passion.

Oh, love, young love, bound in thy rosy band,

Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem life's years of ill.

How could I obtain an introduction to Regina Travers? This was my thought by day and my dream at night. One night my sleep was visited by a sweet dream: I saw Regina, in all her radiant beauty, seated at a piano. Rich music filled my ears. I was on the point of being introduced to her, when the lovely vision dissolved. I was awakened by the horrid bell summoning me to dress for breakfast. I arose, feeling like Tantalus when the luscious feast melted away from his longing lips. I inquired of my friends whether they knew Miss Travers. Some of them had seen her, others had heard of her, but none of them knew her. At last, in a fit of desperation, I called on Miss Priscilla Primrose. "She knows everybody, and must know Regina," I said. After discussing the usual topics, I asked her if she was acquainted with my paragon of all beauty and excellences.

"Miss Travers?—certainly. She is considered a great genius—writes poetry—woman of immense talent!" cried the voluble Priscilla.

"Yes, yes, that is so!" I exclaimed, thinking the exquisite Regina capable of writing as well as inspiring poetry. "Will you introduce me?"

"With much pleasure. When shall it be—this evening?"

Now, consulting my own inclination, I should certainly have said, "Yes, this instant!"—me be introduced to the divine creature." I had, however, to consult the usages of society, and suggested the propriety of making the first visit in the morning. It was accordingly arranged for the next day, at one o'clock.

The next twenty-four hours seemed at least twenty-four days, so impatient was I for the long-expected moment which was to crown my life with happiness. I tried to read. My favourite authors appeared uninteresting. Byron was dull, Shakespeare commonplace, Shelley incomprehensible, Scott tiresome, Addison cold, Tennyson sickening, and even Irving—sweet and genial Irving—had no charm for me that day.

In the evening I went to see "King Lear." This masterpiece of the poet and masterpiece of the actor would, at any other time, have thrilled me to the very soul; but on that night it affected me not at all. My thoughts were far away. The beautiful character of Cordelia seemed a perfect piece of artificial inanity. Indeed, the whole thing was to me so "stale, flat, and unprofitable," that I was glad to get home to sleep and dream of the idol of my soul—Regina Travers.

The next day, with the punctuality of a lover, I called for Miss Priscilla Primrose, and we proceeded at once to Miss Travers's. I must confess a slight feeling of trepidation as I sat awaiting the entrance of her whom I had so long desired to meet. What would be the result of this interview? Perhaps my earthly happiness or misery was to be decided by it, for does not the poet say:

The sum of all that makes a just man happy
Consists in the well choosing of his wife?

These thoughts were put to flight by Priscilla Primrose suddenly bouncing up and exclaiming:

"Good morning, Henrietta. I hope I have not interrupted your literary labours. I have brought Mr. Lemoine to see you. He is a gentleman of literary tastes, and of course you will be very congenial. Miss Travers, allow me to introduce to you my friend, Mr. Lemoine."

I arose and bowed with a look of surprise and disappointment which would have made the fame of an actor. I had prepared for the Miss Travers of my idolatry a neatly turned compliment; but for this Miss Travers—this tall, gaunt Henrietta Travers, with ink-stained fingers, and soiled dress, and dirty cuffs, and rumpled collar, and untidy shoes—I had not a word. I sat in silent amazement, listening to the learned lady's conversation. She was one of the most extreme of the *nil admirari* class. With bold assurance she pronounced Macaulay "a magazine of little things;" Tennyson only a "sweet dreamer;" Thackeray "a satirist;" Shelly "a seeker after the unattainable." She was more kindly disposed toward Tom Moore, whom she called "the poet of love and love of a poet;" and toward Byron (for all women love the handsome sinner.)

As we arose to depart, the charming Henrietta hoped that she should soon have the pleasure of seeing me again. I bowed low, but with a silent resolution "never to look upon her like again."

This great disappointment made me more than ever desirous of knowing Regina Travers, the only one that did or could interest me. To know this lovely creature became the one object of my life, and many wild schemes suggested themselves for the accomplishment of this design; but they were all dismissed as impracticable. This pursuit of Miss Travers was known to all my friends, and they often rallied me on the subject.

"Have you seen Regina?" "I saw her at the theatre last night." "I admire your taste, Lemoine—Regina Travers is exceedingly beautiful."

These were the usual remarks of my friends when they met me. It was several weeks after first seeing Miss Travers that I discovered the family lived in the fashionable quarter of Curzon Street. This was a great point gained, for it enabled me to address my love in the sweet language of flowers. Many bouquets of rich and rare flowers were sent to her, often accompanied by a few lines of tender poetry; for love makes us all sentimental. With what fond delight did I see the sweet rose-buds, which I had so carefully selected in the morning, twined in her glossy hair, as she sat at the window in the soft summer evening!

These beautiful moonlight nights played the very mischief with my heart. It was an exquisite torture for me to behold Regina surrounded by admiring gentlemen, while I, her most devoted admirer, dared not approach; to see some languid dandy hanging over her chair—a sweet familiarity that belonged by right of love to me; to catch the tones of her voice, as soft and silvery as Apollo's lute. Oh! it was maddening to be thus deprived of her society, and to see others far less worthy, basking in the sunshine of her smiles—those "curled darlings," those carpet knights, those butterflies of fashion, hovering around this loveliest flower in the garden of the world! Gazing at that bright and beautiful scene, I felt what a lost soul, buried in the night of unspeakable woe would feel, if he could look up and behold the angels enjoying heavenly bliss. Sometimes, when more than usually affected by her overpowering beauty, I was tempted to fly to her, regardless of form and ceremony,

and, kneeling at her feet, in language made eloquent by love, to tell her how much I worshipped her.

This long and unsuccessful pursuit of the beautiful queen of my heart almost drove me to despair, and at times I thought of yielding to what appeared an inexorable fate, and abandon it as hopeless; but in those moments of gloom and despondency, the noble lines which Bulwer puts in the mouth of Richelieu came to my assistance:

In the lexicon of youth which fate reserves
For a bright manhood, there is no such word
As fail.

One afternoon, about this time, I was taking a walk with my friend Macdonald. Mac's devotion to the fair sex is well known, and his taste generally admitted, though he does sometimes "see Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt."

To give an instance of his love of the fair, on this afternoon we came to a group of little children engaged in their innocent play. One of them, a little thing about three years old, was as beautiful as an angel, and Mac must, of course, stoop and kiss it, at the same time asking its name.

"Emily," was the sweet reply.

When he discovered it was a girl, he gave her another kiss. As we continued our walk, talking, as usual, about love and poetry, I saw Regina approaching in all her transcendent beauty.

Miss Travers always dressed with exquisite taste, but on this afternoon she appeared more than usually elegant. From the beautiful blue bonnet that covered her peerless head to the little kid boot that covered her tiny foot, there was a charming harmony of colour.

"Mac, you have often heard me speak of Regina Travers. The lady now approaching us—the one on the inside—is she. Observe for yourself. You have seen her," I continued, in the language of the old English play, "and must confess, a smile, a look, a sweet word from her, is worth the shouts of a thousand amphitheatres."

"She is supremely beautiful," said Mac, with emphasis, "and I no longer wonder at your ardour. Hippolytus himself would leave Diana to follow such a Venus."

"Well, Mac, you need not leave Alice Gray or Miss Lullie, to follow Regina Travers."

"I think I can easily drive three-in-hand," said Mac, pulling at his yellow moustache, of which he is excessively vain. "And you have been trying three months to be introduced to this peerless Regina, and have not succeeded yet? You are a pretty fellow, Lemoine, to win a fair lady. Why, I'll bet you ten to one that I will know her within a week."

"Done, on condition that you will introduce me."

"Well, I'll see about that," Mac answered, with his peculiar drawl. And with that the subject was dropped for the time.

A few words concerning my friend Macdonald. He is one of the kindest, noblest, and most generous fellows in the world. Heir to an immense fortune, he spends his income with princely liberality, having, as the immortal poet expresses it, "a heart to pity, and a hand, open as day, for melting charity." He has talents, and is full of that enthusiasm and glorious ambition which generally accompany genius. When quite young he published a volume of poetry, which possessed considerable merit; but owing to the obscurity of his publisher and other circumstances, he did not win a name in the literature of his country.

Macdonald has a true poet's love of the beautiful, and thinks a fair woman the loveliest object in creation. He admires beauty wherever he sees it, whether the proud lady in the drawing-room, or the fresh and healthy country girl. He always told me that he should marry the woman he loved, whether rich or poor, high or low, in spite of family, in spite of fashion.

A few days after the walk and talk above mentioned, I was sitting in my chambers, reading one of Thackeray's fascinating novels, when Macdonald came up with a smile of triumph.

"Lemoine, I have won the wager. I was introduced to Regina this morning."

"How? by whom? Isn't she agreeable, charming, fascinating?" I asked, throwing aside the novel, which had no longer any interest for me then.

"Well, I found her quite a bright, bewitching girl, sprightly in conversation, and with pleasing, graceful manners."

"I knew it! Mac, when will you introduce me—to-morrow or the next day? Please do it as soon as possible."

"You are in a great hurry, my dear boy; better wait till I have taken a few moonlight walks with her, and established myself a little in her favour. I am afraid of your winning ways. Your soft voice and dark eyes take mightily with the women. I have not forgotten the trick you played me with Miss Carrington."

"Nonsense, Mac; you know very well there was nothing serious in that affair. It was merely *passer le temps*, during a rather dull summer in the country."

Macdonald would not say when he would introduce me, but declared that he intended to worry me for some time. He was presented to Regina on Saturday; the next day he observed as a *day of rest*; on Monday evening he went to see her. On Tuesday evening he went again, when he was kind enough to speak to Miss Travers of the great desire I had to know her, and the sweet lady was pleased to say that she had heard of me, and should be happy to make my acquaintance; and as a token thereof, sent me a rose.

The next evening, Wednesday, June 1st, 186—, is written in golden characters upon my memory, for then it was that the supreme wish of my soul was gratified. I was introduced to the beautiful queen of my heart. My highest anticipations were more than realized.

As I sat beside this lovely creature, listening to her musical voice, seeing heaven in her dewy eyes, and, in the language of Shelley, catching "light, love, and rapture from her smile," I felt a delicious glow come over me. It seemed as if I had not lived before, and how true appeared the words of the poet:

The heart that loves
Dwells in an Eden, hearing angel voices,
As Eve, in the first garden.

Macdonald continued to visit Regina Travers for about a month, when, as usual with that inconstant gentleman, he found another attraction, and not long since the world was astonished (though I was not) by his marriage with a beautiful actress.

Need I continue my true story of the heart, and speak of our sweet moonlight walks, serenades, and delightful drives? Need I say that, in a few weeks, our acquaintance ripened into friendship, our friendship into love, and that not many months passed away ere Regina Travers became Regina Lemoine?

J. K. S.

BABIES' NAMES.

THE earnest little discussion which arises in a new nursery as to "dear baby's name" seems a little absurd to outsiders, but the instinct of mothers is right. The baby will not be Lord High Chancellor or an archbishop, as mamma and nurse think so probable, but through life one of the most direct influences bearing upon his fortunes will be his name.

It is almost a quality which his mother gives him, something which may smooth his path like a new faculty, or retard it like some physical want or bodily deformity. So great is its influence that it seems a little hard the parent should have so despotic a power, that the child himself should not, say at fifteen, have the right to insist if he sees fit upon a legal rechristening.

It is very hard, and in that coming time when the dignity of humanity is fully appreciated we expect to hear of a revolt of universal childhood in favour of extending that dearly-loved privilege of babies, "doing things one's own self," to the right of rechristening.

There must be scores of children by this time all ticketed Garibaldi, a process equivalent to branding a date on their foreheads, and it is lucky for the next generation of girls that the Princess's name is an old one, for if it had been Casarea or Napoleons they would have borne it none the less.

So long as the name is generic mere ugliness does not greatly matter to the child; but a name given from admiration is almost always peculiar, and if the original wearer were widely known it is difficult to inflict on a child a deeper injury. It puts him throughout his whole life out of gear with his associations, dislocates the idea of the man from the idea of his name, till the mere mention of him excites a smile. If his career is utterly unlike that of his namesake, there is a sense of dissonance: if it resembles it, there is an impression of inferiority.

Nothing could be worse for a rising general than to be named Napoleon, yet the title would sound as ridiculous if attached to a white-faced curate. In most instances the secret idea of the unlucky man would be to live up to his name, to be Mirabeau Stubbs the revolutionist, an idea sure to spoil his life; but even if it worked the other way, half his energy would be exhausted in merely getting rid of his burden.

There is or was a very respectable shoemaker in Norwich, to whom his father, a free-thinker, like most cobblers, gave the names of Voltaire Paine Smith. Smith grew up a meek, godly Sunday-school teacher, with no brains, and his name would have proved a serious embarrassment to his piety but that his neighbours, fortunately for his reputation in class meeting, could not pronounce it. They called him in their ignorance Vulture Smith, and the poor man complained with tears in his eyes that he, best meaning of im-

becile mortals, was universally believed to have earned a nick-name by cruel usury.

Byron Brown may be a most respectable man, but nobody will ever believe in his verses, and Demosthenes Jones had better follow any trade than that of a public speaker.

The mothers may rest assured that of all the mistakes they can make, that of giving their babies names which suggest to all men distinct associations, calling their boys Gracchus or their daughters Semiramis, is the very worst.

There is some reason for the growing dislike to the twelve or fifteen names once called distinctively Christian, probably because they have no relation whatever to Christianity; for the use of a name is to ensure distinctiveness, and when whole clans are named Henry, distinctiveness is not attained. But if they want a new list let them shun the conquerors, and poets, and politicians, and agitators, and ancient Hebrews, and either employ a surname—the use of the mother's as the eldest son's pronomen is a blameless and useful custom, and very "aristocratic"—or, revert to the old Saxon reservoir now so liberally drawn upon for girls, but still neglected for boys' names.

A HIGHLANDER, named Hugh Main, formerly a lock-keeper on the Aberdeen and Inverury Canal, died at Aberdeen recently, at the age of 103 years. He retained all his faculties unimpaired to the last, and was walking about within a few days of his death.

A correspondent, signing himself "A. Lathe," communicates to a morning paper the details of a very singular and ingenious mode of making spurious coins, said to be an American invention. The coiner takes a good gold coin, and by means of delicate machinery and great dexterity, contrives first to take off the milled edge, next to split the surface of the coin so as to separate the obverse and reverse impressions from the body of the coin, next to fit the parts so separated into the milled edge, filling up the interval with a disc of platinum, and soldering the parts together with a preparation of gold and silver. Two gold American Eagles will yield the dexterous coiner £8 10s., while each piece of money thus tampered with is only worth 10s. So perfectly is this process performed, that there is no means of detecting the imposture except by heating the coin with a blow-pipe, and melting the solder which binds the parts together.

RACING AND ROYALTY.—Henry VIII., among the various accomplishments ascribed to him, appears to have possessed a taste for horsemanship, and to have lent no small assistance to the amelioration of our indigenous race by the importation of stock from Spain and Turkey. Horses from the former of these countries, which owed their celebrity to its occupation by the Moors, were afterwards more freely introduced into our paddocks by the wreck of the Armada. This fleet had been furnished with a choice number of barbs; and its destruction upon our coasts proved a boon to the breed of our horses, as well as to the other more important interests. Indeed, we had on that occasion, much need of some sort of aid in this respect, for Elizabeth's ministers were sorely troubled to mount 5,000 cavalry for repelling the invasion. Then James I. was the Macedonian Philip of the age. The palace he built at Newmarket, though it was used in the first instance as a hunting-box, served as a landmark inaugurating the distinction of that town as a great central emporium of sport; and thither generations after generations have repaired, to follow up the work so royally begun, and so well sustained by every class of the community down to the present day.

A VALUABLE WIFE.—Sir William Napier tells us in one of his autobiographical letters: "When the immense mass of King Joseph's correspondence taken at Vittoria was placed in my hands, I was dismayed at finding it to be a huge collection of letters, without order, and in three languages, one of which I did not understand. Many, also, were in very crabbed and illegible characters, especially those of Joseph's own writing, which is nearly as difficult to read as Napoleon's. The most important documents were in cypher, and there was no key. Despairing of any profitable examination of these valuable materials, the thought crossed my mind of giving up the work, when my wife undertook—first, to arrange the letters by dates and subjects—next, to make a table of reference, translating and epitomizing the contents of each; and this, without neglecting for an instant the care and education of a large family, she effected in such a simple and comprehensive manner, that it was easy to ascertain the contents of any letter; and lay hands on the original document in a few moments. She also undertook to decipher the secret correspondence, and not only succeeded, but formed a key to the whole, detecting even the nulls and stops, and so accurately, that when, in course of time, the original key was

placed in my hands, there was nothing to learn. Having mentioned this to the Duke of Wellington, he seemed at first incredulous, observing that I must mean that she had made out the contents of some letters. Several persons had done this for him, he said, but none had ever made out the nulls or formed a key, adding, 'I would have given £20,000 to any person who would have done that for me in the Peninsula.'

PAUL BEDFORD, AND THE BATH THEATRE FORTY YEARS AGO.

A VISIT to Richardson's dramatic booth spoiled Paul Bedford for a Bath auctioneer, and sent him strolling, and enduring what strollers feel till he obtained an engagement in the then well-organized theatre of his native city.

At that period there was one player, at least, at Bath, who had been contemporary with Garrick, namely, old Miss Summers, who had acted during fifty consecutive seasons at Bath only; and in whom, as she tottered slowly to church, when past eighty years of age, no one could recognize the bright and bounding Columbine of sixty years before.

We would fain have heard something of Baker, famous for his mistakes, and who, having once, as Norfolk ('Henry the Eighth,') to say '*Ego et rez meus*,' pronounced the last word as a monosyllable, to the delight of all the jocund scholars in the house. Not that he was worse than Wouds, last of the old-fashioned Bath managers, who had, in his favourite part of Spatterdash, to exclaim, 'Brutes per Joven!' and taking all three words for Latin, uttered the first as a disyllable!

What a stage was that Bath stage of the first quarter of this century, when Mr. Bedford first figured on it! All the stages new in London would not produce such a company as then used to challenge the admiration of Bath city.

Fancy, in one season, having Kean, Young, Warde, Conway, Wallack, W. Farren, and others only next to them in repute (not to mention the 'Philanthropist of Fashion' and all his diamonds,) with Miss O'Neil and a sisterhood worthy of acting with such a principal!

Some of the pieces there played were relics (once popular) of the time of Betterton; 'Philario, or Love lies a-bleeding,' with Miss Jarman in Bellario; 'The Conscience Lovers,' with Warde in the part which once distinguished Barton Booth,—Bevil, junior.

There are still folk there who remember the comic solemnity with which Mr. Bedford played and sang 'Don Guzman and the Ghost of himself;' how gaily he acted Rowell, in 'The Contrivances;' and with what picturesque and melodramatic effect he stood before the audience as Black Frank, to the Meg, Murdochson of Miss Jarman's mother.

We are thankful for the solitary anecdote which Mr. Bedford tells us of this time, when, in playing Norfolk to Kean's Richard, he set Edmund and all the audience in a roar, by the substitution of a word which was not in the original. But he might have told us even better things, of how gigantic Conway and little Edmund had a mutual horror of acting together in the same scene; or of how Mr. Bedford's own Pistol went hilariously off to the Falstaff of his subsequently 'loved Frederick.'—Yates.

His Pistol and his Glumdalca even then caused the Bath play-goers to predict to the vocalist a prosperous career as a low comedian; and his Caliban was at that time as good in most points as Emery's; while Inkle, though it fell short of that of the great original, John Bannister, was the best, at least, on the Western stage.—'Recollections and Wanderings of Paul Bedford.'

THE NAVY SIXTY YEARS AGO.—But what shall be said of the seamen of the past? That there were many of the finest and bravest among them no one can deny, but they were drawn indiscriminately from the best and worst sources. One of the penalties attached to those who took part in the rebellion in Ireland in 1798 was 'service in the navy.' Smugglers were sent to serve their allotted time of penal servitude in the navy. Governors of prisons who had refractory fellows which gave them trouble, had them discharged into the navy. The navy, in a word, was the receptacle for the veriest ruffians unhung. But it was at the same time the receptacle for fine gallant seamen, torn from peaceable pursuits by the press-gang. The necessity for obtaining men for the navy was so imperative, that no scruple was allowed to stand in the way. Press-gangs patrolled the streets of seaports at night, and if they could get no better, laid forcible hands upon landmen suspected to be sailors in disguise. Homeward-bound ships were boarded and plundered of their men, and those who had been thus forcibly obtained were placed in the same category with 'United Irishmen,' the scrapings of galleys, pirates, and smugglers. Such a motley

group manned the *Victory*, bearing Lord Nelson's flag at Trafalgar. They had one common virtue, however, that of readiness to fight an enemy; and it was not unusual to find in the most unmitigated ruffian in other respects, the most undaunted and useful man in a death struggle. The fact is, however, that these discordant elements were reconciled by the tremendous power of naval discipline, and kept in awe by the Marines' muskets. Discipline included a liberal application of the cat.

NEARLY fifty thousand acres of land in Canada have been sown with flax this year; ten times as much as last year.

A BIBLE FOR THE KING OF THE GREEKS.—Dr. Thompson, agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Western Turkey, has lately visited Athens on behalf of the society, to present a copy of the Greek Scriptures to King George the First. His Majesty received Dr. Thompson, who was accompanied by Dr. Kalopothakes, editor of the *Star of the East*, very affably, and expressed his pleasure at receiving the Bible in modern Greek, and his obligations to the society for it.

THE BONDAGE OF BRANDON.

CHAPTER XL.

As in the amethyst confending
Purple with the violet strives,
Hope with disappointment blending,
Ever varies mortal lives.

ANON.

Something ominous and drear,
An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse.

The Siege of Corinth.

THE neigh of a horse in mortal agony is said to be one of the most awful sounds that can salute the ear, especially if it be heard in the dead of night, when only a faint radiance from half-obscured stars illuminates the surrounding landscape; but assuredly that terrible cry which both the Count de Cannes and Webster imagined to emanate from the Earl of Brandon, was quite as startling, from the terrible emphasis with which it was delivered.

The small enclosure which they had entered was thickly wooded, so much so as to be almost impenetrable, but by dint of great exertion and indefatigable industry, the count forced his way some distance into the interior, while Mr. Webster remained near the spot from whence the voice, apparently rising from the ground, had startled them.

He went down on his hands and knees, and commenced a minute search, looking into every hole and cranny, as if he expected that his master had been engulfed by some mysterious earthquake.

De Cannes was unsuccessful in his explorations, and was thinking of returning to the butler, when an exclamation from Mr. Webster, expressing triumph mingled with dismay, recalled him rapidly to his side. He arrived there in a state more resembling a bundle of rags than a human being, for the small twigs of trees, the briars and the thorns, had done their work effectually.

If there were any moths in the wood, domiciled within the neighbourhood of the fragments of cloth, they might have congratulated themselves on the prospect of a sumptuous banquet upon the melancholy remains of the tailor's art.

The count found Mr. Webster bending over a dark sombre mass, which had the semblance of humanity about it. As if for the express purpose of aiding his investigations, the sky cleared a little, and a flood of feeble light streamed down through the interlacing boughs and fell upon the convulsed countenance of the Earl of Brandon. He was mute now; mute as death. No sound, however trivial or incoherent, escaped his lips, which were tightly compressed together, and his long dark hair was tangled and matted over his forehead, upon which little globules of perspiration, which the faithful butler feared were the death-damps, were gathering. His eyes were fixed with a glassy stare, and his face was gathered up into lines and wrinkles, evidencing a distortion the result of intense pain.

So intent were the two men upon the earl's facial disfigurement that they did not for some moments cast their eyes upon the remaining portion of his body, and when they did so the cause of the disastrous plight in which they found him was apparent.

Mr. Webster knelt on the ground open-mouthed with astonishment; the count being more practical in his nature, began to try and reconcile cause with effect.

Round the right leg of the earl, just above the knee, was tightly clasped a huge mass of iron. There were teeth in some parts of it, sharply filed like those of a saw. It was what is commonly called a gin, or steel-

trap, which is set in pheasant covers for the purpose of deterring poachers from practising their depredations there. A relic of barbarism and the feudal ages, it cannot be too strongly condemned, for its cruelty is monstrous and inhuman.

The earl lived in a county in which the feeling of landowners ran very strong against poachers, and no pains were spared to drive them, root and branch, away from that part of England. Certainly the earl warned intending poachers of the fate which awaited them, by huge placards painted in black on a white ground upon a piece of board, which were hung up in conspicuous positions against the trunks of trees, intimating that steel-traps were set in various places for the express purpose of wounding and maiming trespassers and game-stealers.

It was strange that retribution should have overtaken the Earl of Brandon in so singular a manner, and that he should himself have fallen into the snare that he was so rigorously strict in setting for others.

He must have imagined that the thief who had stolen his jewellery had taken refuge in the plantation, and with reckless audacity he had followed him to his own destruction. The massive iron trap had, as far as the Count de Cannes could guess, snapped the bone of the thigh asunder, so that the pain the earl had suffered was of course intense. The trap was a horrible instrument, and calculated to inspire terror in the minds of those who looked upon it. It was of vast size, and the spring which moved it was as strong as several coils of double-twisted iron wire could make it.

The Count de Cannes endeavoured to pull what may be called the two jaws of the trap away from one another, but he might as well have tried to move a mountain. It always required the strength of four gamekeepers to set it; and finding that his efforts were ineffectual, he desisted, and addressing Mr. Webster, said:

'The sooner the earl is removed from this horrible position the better. I have been trying to undo the trap; but I find that, unaided, my exertions are useless. You had better go to the Priory and rouse some of the servants. I will wait here while you go.'

'I knew it would happen,' said the butler, wringing his hands. 'Mrs. Cob spoke true enough when she told me about the falling oak. It's true; it's all true: she said it would come true. Being caught in a trap, too! Who'd have thought it? What a death for an Earl of Brandon!'

'Don't talk nonsense, my good fellow,' exclaimed the count; 'he's no more dead than you are; but he very likely will be, if you don't do as I tell you: go and fetch somebody who can assist us.'

'I'm going, sir; but being, as I may say, overcome by my feelings, which, I do assure you, they are too much for me; I do hope, sir, you'll make some allowance for the grief of an old servant who has been in the family going on—'

'Don't talk any more; go, if you are going,' said the count, sternly, interrupting Mr. Webster, and looking at him with vexation, arising from his flame-wasting loquacity.

'I'm off, sir.'

'Very well. Tell them to bring a shutter or a hurdle—anything of that sort to put the body on—and don't forget some brandy; we may want it. Don't let the grass grow under your feet, for I can tell you that every minute is precious.'

'I'll run, sir, as fast as my legs—which are not so young as they might be—will carry me,' replied Mr. Webster, setting off at a jog-trot, and penetrating through the jungle with the ferocious pertinacity of a wild boar in search of truffles.

The count sat down by the side of the Earl of Brandon, who moved occasionally uneasily, as if he were going to awake from his insensibility. Acute pain and protracted suffering had reduced him to a state of prostration at which blank vacancy of mind and numbed sensation ensued, leaving behind it fluttering vitality, while death stood by with an extinguisher in his hand, ready at any moment to achieve the extinction of the spark of life which was burning feebly—so feebly—in the shattered and exhausted frame.

De Cannes was unable to drive away a rush of self-reproach which took possession of him; for if it had not been for his nocturnal robbery, the Earl of Brandon, who was now lying crippled, crushed, and bleeding, would have been enjoying the placid rest from which he was disturbed when the count cried out on feeling a needle run into his naked foot; but he was a man of philosophic manner. It took a great deal to upset his equanimity, and he did not hold the crippling or even the life of a human being so dearly as to allow himself to be worried by the occurrence. His had been an eventful life, and once, in the days of innocence and youth, he had been an impressionable for good as other people, but the world had made a football of him, and kicked him from pillar to post and

from post to pillar, until he had been so trampled upon and buffeted that he achieved callousness, always the resource and the characteristic of misfortune's playthings.

The count felt just a passing touch of sorrow in beholding the earl in so disastrous a condition. If he had been consulted beforehand by fate, he would have preferred the earl's accident to have been left out of the chapter of the family history, which he had materially assisted in writing. But, as the thing had happened, and all the regrets and all the wishes possible would not alter what was an indisputable matter-of-fact, he ceased to trouble himself about it.

The earl was still unconscious when Mr. Webster came back, accompanied by the entire masculine part of the establishment, looking scared and startled, for the garrulous butler had, as was his wont, exaggerated everything, and dilated upon the lamentable occurrence with all the force of a loquacious tongue. The count rose up, and finding that he was the only one amongst the party who had not lost his head, took the command, and issued those orders which seemed to him most calculated to give the sufferer relief. By his direction, three men placed themselves on each side of the trap, while two more stood in readiness to seize the leg as the sides of the trap went back, and remove it from its perilous position. At a given signal, the men exerted all their strength. The iron teeth emerged from the flesh and left the bone that they had mingled and forced their way into as if it had been a piece of touchwood. The injured limb was lifted gently up and placed upon the grass.

Then the men left go their hold, and the trap came together again with an ominous clanging snap.

The blood began to flow from the numerous wounds which the earl had received, and, possibly owing to this cause, he partially came to himself, but he was too faint and ill to speak—he could only move his head about in an idiotic manner.

The count saw that immediate surgical attendance would be necessary, for, in all probability, amputation would have to be resorted to. Beckoning one of the men to his side, who, from his build and general appearance, looked as if he were a good runner, he said:

"Can you run?"

"Yes, sir," replied the man.

"Here's a sovereign for you if you will undertake to do your best. Go to the family doctor, who, I presume, does not live far off, and bring him back with you."

"Yes, sir."

"And tell him to prepare himself for contingencies. Say that the Earl of Brandon's leg has sustained a compound fracture, and that the only chance of saving his life may be amputation. How long shall you be, think you?"

The man thought a moment, as if calculating the distance, and replied:

"Half-an-hour, sir; or from that to three-quarters."

The Count de Cannes gave him the stimulating piece of gold, and he went off at a pace which showed that he had not exaggerated his power of rapid locomotion, when he said that he could run well.

The earl was lifted lightly upon the rude stretcher the men had brought with them, and some tufts of grass put under the wounded limb, to make it rest easier. Then the mournful procession started for the Priory.

It was fortunate for Lady Blanche Brandon that this accident had taken place after her marriage; for if it had happened a few days earlier, she would have been compelled, however unwillingly, to postpone the ceremony, and who shall say what untoward events might not have occurred during the interval which would have had to elapse before they could again make preparations for standing before the altar.

As the men wound their way through the trees with which the park was adorned, they might have been mistaken for a party of Hibernians, celebrating an Irish funeral, only the extraordinary vocal sounds, by means of which the Irish are in the habit of expressing their grief, were wanting.

As if to mock the misery of the Earl of Brandon, the moon, which was in his second quarter, rose up and sent its pallid beams quivering towards the earth. The moonbeams played around his death-like countenance, and showed in bold relief the figures of those who surrounded him.

It revealed the nervous twitch of the earl's mouth, as an inequality in the road caused one of his bearers to stumble, jolting the hurdle, and giving the earl inexpressible pain. His hands were damp and clammy, and now and then he compressed them tightly together, causing the moisture to run out between his fingers as it would from a damp towel tightly wrung.

It revealed the ruby coloured blood trickling slowly from the broken leg, and falling upon the grass with a monotonous drip, drip.

It revealed the serving men walking slowly, grave, and silent, like soldiers marching towards the walls of a fortified town to lead a forlorn hope, with Mr.

Webster in the rear, hardly able to refrain from weeping, partly because he had an affection for his master, and partly because there was "no will."

It revealed the Count de Cannes walking alongside the hurdle, upon which the body of the Earl of Brandon was reclining, looking Sphinx-like and impassible, as if he were revolving mighty secrets in his brain, such as have perplexed the Magi for ages, and as if the state of the Earl of Brandon was his last care upon this earth, which is sometimes called a subliminary sphere, for no other reason than that the moon happens to have a few hundred thousand miles the start of it in the universal system.

When the Priory was reached, lights were seen flitting about from nearly every window. News of the earl's misadventure had penetrated the strongholds of those who slept, and casting off their drowsiness, they mustered in force, in order, in the first place, to gratify their curiosity, and, in the next, to pay a tribute of domestic respect to their unfortunate master.

They laid him on a mattress, and propping up his head, gave him stimulants; and the Count de Cannes, who seemingly had a smattering of almost everything, bound up the injured limb with great care, so as to stop the hemorrhage, which threatened to drain the veins of the patient of every drop of blood they contained.

He was, to some extent, successful, and when the doctor arrived, he complimented him on his foresight, and thoroughly approved of what he had done.

With professional acumen, the surgeon examined the part, and those who watched his face were not reassured by his expression.

After a quarter of an hour's deliberation, he sent down stairs for his carpet-bag, and produced an array of instruments which were highly suggestive of cutting and wounding.

Taking the count for an intimate friend of the family, the doctor addressed him, and said:

"The only chance of saving the earl's life is to amputate."

"Had you not better speak to Brandon before you make the attempt?" replied De Cannes.

"I question whether he is sufficiently himself to be able to understand us, if we consult him."

"Let us try, at all events, for the sake of ulterior remarks."

"As you will," said the doctor. Going up to the earl and taking him by the hand: "My lord!" he exclaimed.

The earl's face was expressionless—he neither heard nor understood the exclamation.

"Have I your permission to amputate? It is a desperate remedy, but diseases that are desperate require them."

Still no recognition—still no response.

"This is a case, sir," said the doctor, addressing himself to the count, "in which I feel fully justified in taking the responsibility of decided action upon myself. May I claim your kind assistance? From the little I have seen of you, you appear to be a man of some nerve; and any one without it would, at this juncture, be worse than useless to me."

"I am very much at your service," replied the count, blandly.

The doctor then, with the count's assistance, began to operate, and in a short time the once vigorous, athletic, and accomplished Earl of Brandon was the wreck of his former self.

When the work was over, and the last ligature bound up, the count went down stairs and called for some brandy. He did not feel inclined for sleep.

Sir Lawrence Allingford, who had been awakened by the hubbub and unusual stir, shortly joined him, asking what was the cause of the commotion.

"You know nearly as much as I do," replied De Cannes. "The butler woke me up in my first sleep, to my inexpressible disgust, and then told me that something was wrong somewhere. Putting implicit faith in his vague and improbable statement—thus evidencing my usual blind trust in erring human nature—I accompanied him upon an expedition which resulted in our discovering our unlucky host, the Earl of Brandon, fixed by the leg in a steel-trap. I have just been auxiliary to the amputation of the injured limb, and am waiting with some impatience for the doctor's report to see whether he has any chance of living or not."

Sir Lawrence expressed himself much shocked at the calamity which was conveyed by his friend's slipshod response, and entered into conversation with the count, during which he elicited all the links of evidence necessary to make the chain complete and comprehensible.

At a quarter past seven the doctor descended from the earl's bedroom, and entered the apartment in which the count and Sir Lawrence Allingford were sitting.

"Well," exclaimed De Cannes, "I trust that Brandon is much improved?"

The doctor shook his head.

"Is he worse, doctor?"

"He is as ill as a man can be."

"Is there no chance of saving his life?" inquired the count curiously.

"That is a question which time alone can elucidate," replied the doctor, with a solemn aspect.

A heavy sadness fell upon all those within the Priory walls, and for some days the Earl of Brandon lay betwixt life and death.

People said that the chances were much in favour of the latter.

CHAPTER XL

Can this be death? there's bloom upon his cheek,

But now I see there is no living hue.

But a strange hectic, like the unnatural red

Which autumn plants upon the finished leaf.

It is the same. Oh, God, that I should dread

To look upon the same.

With a splash and a gurgle William Girling reappeared some yards from the river bank. His flannel dressing gown had slipped off his shoulders, and might have been seen floating down the river with the tide. The stream that day was troubled and turbulent, and fretted between the banks, against which an unusual body of water was pressing. The waves were large, and the wind which was blowing made swimming anything but an agreeable or easy pastime.

Mary looked at her husband with eager excitement, and Miss Lucy Hamlin had to exert all her strength to prevent her rushing down the garden and precipitating herself bodily into the river, in a futile endeavour to rescue William, whom she considered in great jeopardy.

But to her surprise, he struck out boldly for the shore, and swam as if his limbs had not been racked by rheumatism a short time before. He buffeted the water with lusty strokes, and cleaved the stream with all the vigour of early manhood. She could see him make very sensible progress every minute, and before she had ceased wondering at what she considered a phenomenon, he had reached the centre of the stream, and still pressed on, with what, for a man in his condition, was little less than superhuman strength. The next fear that assailed Mary was that her husband would never be able to keep up long enough to reach the opposite side of the river.

"Oh!" she exclaimed in piteous accents, "he must be drowned, it is impossible that his strength can last long enough."

"Why not?" asked Lucy Hamlin, calmly.

"He has been ill so long."

"You must remember that he is not in his normal condition; he is excited and feverish; he is sustained by an unusual flow and rush of frantic strength which pervades his veins, and makes him, for the time being, another man. I think that there is every prospect of his being saved."

"If he is saved," said Mary, only half reassured, "he will be sure to die. Cold water is the worst thing in the world for rheumatism. It will kill him. In his sober senses, the bare idea of a cold bath would have shocked him beyond measure. He would as soon have thought of flying."

"You must excuse me, but there again you are wrong," replied Lucy Hamlin, who seemed to have some knowledge of what the Malvern people call hydrophobia. "Very likely the sudden change and excitement, and one thing and another may cure him, and make him himself again. I do not wish to inflame your mind with fallacious hopes, but I have met with such cases, and I am sure I sincerely hope and trust that this may prove one of them."

"You are very kind—very kind, indeed," said Mary, pressing her new friend's hand feelingly.

In the mean time Girling had made great progress. He had some distance to swim, but he accomplished his task to admiration, swimming as evenly and with as much ease as if he were racing for a wager. As he neared the opposite side of the river, his strokes grew feebler, and it was evident that he was swimming with difficulty. Mary was so nervous that she made sure he was about to sink, and covered her face with her hands to shut out the heart-rending spectacle.

Miss Hamlin was either made of stern stuff, or she did not feel so much interested in the man's fate as Mary, for she gazed unflinchingly and watched Girling's contest with the tide with the greatest expectation.

When within a few feet of the shore, he was certainly much spent; for he paddled, first with one hand and then with the other, in the wild manner in which a dog exerts himself on being thrown into the water for the first time. His head sank once or twice, and he disappeared from view, soon, however, coming once more to the surface, like a piece of wood thrown violently into the river, the lightness of which, in comparison to the density of the water, soon asserts itself, bringing it to the outer air again.

So long did this one-sided battle last, that even Lucy Hamlin began to entertain doubts as to Girling's

ultimate safety. She blamed herself in this extremity for not having had the sense at first to go down to the water-side and call for assistance. It was too late now to do so, and all she could do was to offer up a fervent prayer for heaven's mercy, and its gracious succour in the hour of need.

When Miss Hamlin least expected it, Girling's safety was secured. Although he was a considerable way from the bank, the river shelved down for some distance, and was very shallow.

His feet touched the bottom; and, summoning up all the strength which yet remained in him, he waded in a tottering manner towards the shore. The tide was running down, and a few feet of very soft mud had to be traversed; but he had no sooner reached the slimy deposit than his strength gave way, and he sank down upon the mud, deprived of sense or the power of motion.

Once assured of his escape from drowning—a fate which was so imminent just before—Miss Hamlin turned her attention to Mary, and with a little roughness, excusable under the circumstances, pulled her hands from her face, exclaiming, in animated tones: "See, see! he is safe. He has reached the land at last!"

"Oh, thank you, for telling me that!" replied Mary, gazing in the direction in which Miss Hamlin's outstretched hands were pointed.

"Don't thank me," answered Lucy, a little sternly. "I have not been instrumental in saving your husband's life. Address your gratitude to a higher power than earth can boast."

Mary felt rebuked, and cast her eyes down on the ground in a dejected manner.

"Stay you here!" cried Miss Hamlin, "while I go and seek assistance. He must not be allowed to remain there any longer. The mud may chill his bones and make him worse than ever."

"Running out of the house, she went down to the river by a small lane, which led to a boat-house. She was not long in making the people understand what she wanted.

They had not observed the passage of the river by Girling, but they were very ready and willing to render what assistance they could.

A boat was instantly launched, and two men started to bring back the body of the insensible man.

It was lucky they lost no time in arriving, for they found him half-smothered in fetid and offensive mud. They lifted him up and put him in the boat, and when they were clear of the mud, they bathed his face with water and made him look a little less sepulchral. Covering him up with a common horse-cloth, they carried him to his cottage and put him in a bath, administering those cordials which they thought would be most efficacious in effecting his recovery.

When he came to himself he looked round him, recognized his wife, spoke kindly to her, drank some brandy-and-water, took some gruel, and almost instantly fell asleep.

He continued in a sound slumber till the next morning.

When he again awoke he was perfectly well. No rheumatic pain racked his limbs, and though a slight feebleness yet lingered about him, he was more like the William Girling of twelve months before, than he had been at any time since his admission to the hospital, after the almost fatal shot which he received in his scuffle with Sir Lawrence Allingford.

It was somewhat strange that when Girling should be recovering from a dangerous illness, the earl should be stretched upon a bed of sickness, and continue in so much danger, that even his own doctor could not tell whether he would live, or die.

Lucy Hamlin was a young lady living with her mother, who was a widow. Captain Hamlin had fallen in the Crimea, and Mrs. Hamlin had ever since wedded herself to a life almost conventual in its strictness. She never lost an opportunity of doing good, and was regarded by all who knew her as one of the most conscientious and truly religious women in the town. Like Victor Hugo's bishop, she tried by all the means in her power, to be of service to her fellow-creatures. She was not a hot gossip, but she was patient, believing, faithful, and much-enduring. Her daughter resembled her in many respects. She was a little enamoured of the vanities of the world, and did not disdain its pomps. This was only natural at her age, and Mrs. Hamlin was sufficiently judicious and sensible not to try and repress it. There was something, it is difficult to say what, about Mary which Lucy took a liking to. Perhaps she liked her because she was miserable, perhaps because she was much-enduring, and had a great deal to contend against and put up with, perhaps because she had saved her from an ignominious doom, and a long imprisonment—we always like those we have befriended; or, perhaps it was on account of some mysterious sympathy between them, which brought them together whether they would or no—some inexplicable magnetism.

Lucy Hamlin did not confine herself to words, she

made her friendship practical, for she assisted Mary Girling in many ways. She sent the boys to school, and paid a few little debts that the usually thrifty housewife had incurred during her inability to work. She helped her nurse her husband, and brought him innumerable things which were considered strengthening and conducive to his recovery, but she did not omit the opportunity of trying to impress Mary with a sense of her religious duties, and was much delighted to find her an apt pupil.

William Girling lay upon his bed thankful that he was getting well; but utterly oblivious of gratitude to that providence which had decreed his convalescence. He tossed about in a state of feverish anxiety, waiting impatiently for the time to arrive when he would be able to get about as he did formerly. He indulged in day-dreams, and built castles in the air as beautiful as those which rise up before the eyes of tired and thirsty travellers in the deserts of the East, or the prairies of the Far West. He imagined Lady Brandon once more under his authority, and he pictured to himself a still more golden harvest than the one he had hitherto reaped. In point of fact, he could not be said to have garnered it into his barn, like a successful farmer.

He had been interrupted before he could enjoy what he had done so much for.

He had been spoiled in his triumph at the moment of fruition.

As long as her ladyship lived he knew that he could never want. His hold over her was too strong to be shaken off, because it appealed to her fears. Had he appealed to her love, to her affection, to her gratitude, to her charity, to her good-nature, he would have been grievously disappointed. He held her in the grip of a vice, and he gazed over the prospective moment when he should once more confront her and calmly demand the price of his further silence. He wondered what had happened during the long, weary months of his protracted illness; wondered whether her ladyship had allied herself to Sir Lawrence Allingford; wondered whether she had left the country to avoid his probable persecutions; wondered if fate would be kinder and more propitious to him than it had been before.

One thing he swore, with a solemnity and fierceness with which men never swear unless they are determined, and that was, that he would follow Lady Brandon from London to Paris, from Paris to Marseilles, from Marseilles to Alexandria, from thence to Suez, and from the Isthmus to the sunny East, before he would be baffled. If Europe did not contain her he would ransack Asia, and if Asia was found wanting, he would try if Africa were not more productive. Africa, with its swamps and its fevers and its malarias, its deadly serpents, its hostile tribes, had no terrors for him when engaged in such a pursuit. If that immense tract of land which deserves to be called Livingstone's Continent, was signorant of her presence, he would take ship—even if he had to work his passage out—and explore the peopled cities and the pathless wastes of America the vast and wonderful.

Formerly he had looked upon Lady Blanche simply as the man in the fairy tale looked upon the magic goose which laid him golden eggs. Now he hated her, for she had been the cause of much misery and suffering to him, much despair, much pain and anguish of mind.

The doctor whom Miss Hamlin had called in told him he would be himself again after a few weeks' care and rest, and during that time William Girling luxuriated in the idea that he would be able at the expiration of the given time to commence his pursuit of her ladyship. Before he started on the expedition of exploration, he deemed it advisable to endeavour to unravel the mystery in which his wife resolutely persisted in wrapping the fate of the child, who in distant days was destined to be Earl of Brandon, and heir to all that large estate known as Kirkdale, together with many others.

Lady Brandon, with all her pride and haughty independence, was but puny and insignificant in Girling's hands. He had the knowledge of her misdeeds, and with that knowledge he could crush her, overwhelm her, and grind her down to the very dust.

As he indulged these thoughts, he contemplated a glorious future for himself, and his nature was sufficiently bad and dastardly to encourage an evil conception, which had for its purport the banishment of his wife from his society in that day of his prosperity.

Girling had lately become one of those men in whose composition gratitude does not exist. You may work for them, slave for them, devote your whole life to them—and what is the result? What will they give you for it? In what way will they reward you? When you are no longer useful to them—when, like an old blood-horse that has won many a race in its time, you ask to be put in the paddock to end your days in idleness, they tell you to go about your business; if you think yourself ill-treated, you have your remedy.

Bring an action against them, but not for a specific performance of contract, for they never so far committed themselves as to give you a legal hold on them. Sue them for work and labour, and they will plead never indebted. They will evade you by some quibble; and if you are dying of want and starvation, they will not put themselves out of the way to give you the price of the loaf of bread which would save your life.

While you are useful to them the case is different. They will feast you sumptuously, they will reward you liberally (if you know how to make a bargain with them), and they will make you believe that you are on the high road to fortune; but once try to raise your head above the water which encompasses it, and they will ruthlessly push you down again, even at the risk of suffocating you.

If Girling could have raised himself in the social scale by sacrificing his wife, would he have hesitated to do so?

Not for a moment. He would have cast her from him, and have formed new ties and new connections.

Happily for Mary's peace of mind, she was ignorant of her husband's secret thoughts.

Some people are purified by suffering. They become more considerate for others, and the worldly pride which an easy position inspires in most of us is toned down; but Girling became more egotistic than ever. He only thought of the aggrandizement of himself, and he made himself a sort of animated Car of Juggernaut with huge wheels, beneath which he was prepared to grind into powder all those whom it was necessary for him to remove from his path.

He was willing to make his wife one of those.

The lane which to William Girling had appeared so long, and was apparently without a turning, at last evidenced that it was not a straight line, but simply an elongated passage, with a curve at the end of it.

He became convalescent, and as soon as he was able to walk about, he watched his wife with the activity of a detective. He noticed one morning that she dressed herself and said that she did not expect she should be home till the afternoon or the evening.

It at once occurred to Girling that Mary was going to see the child. He took no notice of her declaration, contenting himself with hoping that she might enjoy herself, and requesting that she would return as quickly as she could, as he had no doubt he should feel lonely without her.

Mary had no sooner left the house than Girling put on his hat and followed her at a distance. She looked behind her more than once, but as if he had anticipated her doing so, Girling slipped into some angle of the wall, or hid himself within some doorway.

He had expected that she would seek the railway station and travel into the country, but instead of doing so, she quickly walked through the town, as if she were going to Isleworth. A tract of open country lay before her, and after a journey of about an hour's duration, she stopped at a farm-house, which stood by itself in the midst of a flat country. It had the usual amount of barns, cowsheds, and other conveniences for cattle around it, and there was a neat little garden in front, which looked as if it were tended with sedulous care by those to whom it belonged.

Mary lifted the latch which was attached to the gate and entered. Girling remained outside; he thought it would be imprudent for him to venture any farther. Turning abruptly to the left he sought the farm-yard and accosted one of two men who were threshing corn in a barn.

"Good morning," he said.
"Morning, master," replied the man.
"Got a nice head of corn here?"
"Yes; it ain't lad as the corn gone."
"How are the potatoes?"
"Taters is tidy."
"It's warm."

"I won't say it's cold," replied the man, laying into the wheat with renewed vehemence.

"Barley looking up?" asked Girling.

"Cut and housed this week or more."

"Oh! and oats?"

"Same as last year."

"You've nothing to grumble at, then?"

The man laid down his flail and looking sedately at Girling, said:

"Nothing to grumble at? Did you ever hear of a reamer who hadn't? No, you didn't. Why, bless of Sir Robert Peel and free trade, we don't get the prices we used to. The country is not what it was. Look at wheat, forty shillings a quarter."

Girling was standing at the entrance to the barn, and being unable to reply to the energetic remark of the man, turned his attention from the polished floor, upon which the wheat was threshed, to the farmyard.

While his eyes were wandering from pigs to cows, and from cows to horses, and from horses to a very fine specimen of mules, he caught sight of a child about three years old, toddling with some difficulty over a



[A MADMAN'S REMEDY.]

treacherous looking heap of straw. He left the barn and advanced towards him. A suspicion entered his mind that he was beholding the child whom he had rescued from an untimely death, when its aunt, Lady Blanche Brandon, had condemned it to death.

It was a manly-looking little fellow, and having surmounted the difficulty of the straw, came to Girling, and looking at him suspiciously, made his way towards the barn.

Girling stopped him, by saying:

"Well my little man, where are you going?"

The boy fixed his eyes upon him as if he were not sure whether it would not be derogatory to his dignity to answer him, and said:

"I want to see the fashing; I don't want to 'peak to you."

"Why not? Don't you like me?" said Girling, smiling.

"I don't know you; and my mamma, who comes to see me every month, says I must not speak to people I don't know," replied the child, biting his thumb.

"Well, you're a fine boy for your age," said Girling, following the little fellow to the barn, whither he had toddled.

When he arrived there he stood still and watched the strokes of the flails as they descended upon the unresisting corn.

"Your child, sir?" inquired Girling of the man to whom he had first spoken.

"No, master."

"Not yours?"

"No child of mine," he replied, testily.

"Oh, belongs to the house, I suppose?"

"It don't belong to the house neither."

"It's a stranger, then?"

"No; it ain't a stranger."

"Relation, perhaps?"

"Wrong again, master," replied the man. "It ain't even a cousin German."

"Friend of the family?"

"Not it."

"What is it, then?"

"Only a lodger," replied Girling's informant.

"A lodger?"

"Yes. Some 'un pays so much a month for its keep and that, and—he passed his hand over his forehead to keep his hair out of his eyes—and that's what it is."

"What's his name?"

"Dunno his right name: call him Theophilus here."

"Theophilus, I suppose you mean?" said Girling, with a smile, arising from superior intelligence.

"Don't mean nothing of the sort."

An emphatic whack with the flail.

"If you like to call him Peter, there's no hindering of you."

Another whack.

"I didn't mean any offence," Girling said, deprecatingly.

"None taken when there's none meant," answered the man, laconically.

"Come here, Theophilus," exclaimed Girling.

The boy hesitated, and walked towards the corn-threshers.

"Come along!" continued Girling, "I shall not hurt you."

"What do you want?" asked the boy, timidly.

"I want to speak to you, my little man."

"Come inside to my mamma, then."

"Presently. Come to me first."

"No," replied the child, turning shrinkingly away.

"He won't speak to strangers," said the farmer to Girling.

"Won't he?"

"Not a bit of it. He's as proud as a king."

"Does he like you?"

"Why, yes. He's took kindly to me, because I'm about the place, and that makes a difference."

"So it does."

"You'd come along with me, Theophilus, wouldn't you?"

"Not if I didn't like," said the child, tossing his head.

"There's a spirit for you, master," cried the man.

"What do you think o' that? Oh! he's a chip o' the old block, a thorough-bred chip, I warrant you."

"But," said Girling, caustically, "you don't happen to know what block he is a chip of?"

"What matters? he's true blue," replied the man.

"Good-bye, Theophilus! I hope we shall be better friends when we next meet," exclaimed Girling.

"Bye," replied the child, without holding out his hand.

"So that's the future Earl of Brandon," thought Girling, as he left the farm-yard. "Well, I won't say that there isn't something in blood after all."

He thought it would be better for him to get away, in case his wife should see him and take measures to remove the child and place it somewhere else. As long as the boy was where he was at present, Girling did not care, because he could put his hand upon him at any moment.

He reached home a long time before his wife, and asked her on her arrival whether she had enjoyed her excursion. She replied in the affirmative.

"Why did you not take me?" he said.

"A wife cannot take her husband everywhere," was the evasive reply.

"Do I know your friends?"

"I think not."

"Where do they live?"

"Some way from here."

"Where?" Girling inquired, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye.

"I shan't tell you," replied Mary, petulantly, running up-stairs with the children so as to avoid further questioning.

"She will not trust me," thought Girling, "and she is not worthy of my confidence. It is fortunate for me that I have out-witted her. Let her live in an atmosphere of confidence. It will be easy for me to awaken her when I choose."

Mary Girling's hand was well once more, and she could work as she had been accustomed to before her accident. With what she earned and with Miss Lucy Hamlin's timely loans, she continued to get on very well. She had hoped to have kept William at home, but she was disagreeably surprised one morning when he asked her for some money, announcing his intention of going to town.

"To town, William?" she exclaimed.

"Yes. I have business there."

"Of what kind?"

"Never your mind. It is business that will bring in some money."

"But we do not want any."

"Oh! don't we?" he said, mockingly. "I think we do. We certainly have enough to buy bread with, but we are living from hand to mouth. I should like to see things a little more settled. Give me the money. Any silver you have will do."

"I would rather you stayed at home," said Mary.

"That does not matter. I want to go, and I mean going."

Mary reluctantly gave him the money he asked for.

"That's right, my girl," he exclaimed. "I am going to make a thousand times as much as this. You don't suppose I can live upon you and your exertions all my life, do you?"

She said faintly "no," though she wished with all her heart he would be content to do so.

William Girling put on his hat, walked to the station, and set out on his travels to find Lady Blanche Brandon, now Mrs. Reginald Welby. For although she might still have called herself Lady Blanche, she refused to do so. People ascribed her reluctance to do so from diffidence, but she had reasons of her own which they did not wot of.

(To be continued.)



[MR. FONTAINE FINDS HIS NIECE.]

THE FATAL SECRET.

CHAPTER XVII.

No power achieved either by arms or birth,
Equal love's empire, all that mortal life
Walter.

NIGHT after night, throughout the whole of Isola's absence, the same supernatural persecutions were repeated, the same attempt to extract from Fontaine a pledge that she should never return to the shelter of his roof, but without effect.

The draft of his will was clearly copied, and he placed it in his desk with the original, intending in a short time to go and have it formally engrossed by a lawyer. A few days afterwards he again sought for them to make some trifling alterations, and both papers were found torn into fragments, which were scattered over the bottom of the desk.

That night his familiar told him that he had done it; that he would find means to destroy every instrument which alienated from Savella any portion of the property which was justly hers.

Fontaine had fallen into the habit of replying to the voice as if the speaker were a tangible presence, and he resentfully said:

"I will place my will where even you cannot reach it."

In response a mocking laugh came, followed by the words:

"Try it—try it, Claude, and see if you can find a spot into which I shall be unable to penetrate."

The night-side of nature had always possessed a mystic attraction to Fontaine, as it has for most imaginative persons; and terrible as this visitation was, he was gradually becoming accustomed to its nightly presence, and indifferent to its threats.

He was firmly resolved that no power should induce him to give up the child he had reared, and loved as his own; and in his heart he derided the thought that the commands of a phantom could induce him to commit such an injustice.

The will was again written and placed in an iron chest, in the closet in his own room; he carried the key constantly about his person, yet three days afterwards, when he sought for it, that he might take it with him, he found it destroyed as the other had been.

A thorough examination of the lock convinced him that it had not been tampered with; but, strange as the occurrence was, Fontaine still persevered in carrying out his original intention. A skeleton, to be filled out, was sent to his lawyer, with an urgent request that he would have it ready for signature at the

end of a week, when he would be in town to complete the business before competent witnesses.

During the absence of Isola, Savella endeared herself to Fontaine very much; she accompanied him in his daily walks.

Seated in a large chair, with his noble head bowed upon his hands, Fontaine listened to the wild German airs she played, and visions of the Hartz mountains, with all their legends of *diableris*, arose before him. His brother and himself had lingered long in Germany before visiting Italy; and that happy time, each hour of which was filled with some new and delightful impression, came back to him with vivid power. He lived those days over and over again in memory, and vainly tried to cast into oblivion all that followed them.

Autumn, with its gorgeous beauty, and days of serene grandeur, had set in. The mountains were bathed in purple mist, through which the changing foliage gleamed like brilliant jewels. The frost king had already breathed upon it, and like the princess in the fairy tale, whose words were pearls and diamonds, his magic breath had scattered ruby, emerald and topaz hues over every portion of the beautiful valley.

One afternoon, Fontaine was detained from home several hours later than usual, and returning deeply depressed in spirits, he yearned for his usual consolation—music; but on inquiring for his niece, he was told that she had gone out for a walk.

After a few restless turns through the hall, he again threw on his hat, and took the pathway which he had observed Savella always pursued of late when she set out for her afternoon walk. It wound over the hill and descended on the other side into a deep, romantic dell, through which a narrow stream rippled.

The woodland had been cleared of underbrush, and rustic seats were placed at intervals beneath the trees. Fontaine had proceeded half a mile without encountering any one, and began to think Savella must have taken another path, when the sound of voices struck upon his ear. The speakers were sheltered behind a clump of bushes; but a few rapid steps brought the intruder in full view of the two who fancied themselves secure from observation.

Savella was seated in a grape-vine chair, formed by twisting the long pendulous branches together, and at her feet reclined Philip Vane, resting his head against the side of her rustic seat, and holding her hand clasped in both his own.

He was speaking earnestly and passionately, and the expression of the girl's face fully revealed what

was passing in her heart. Fontaine read its meaning in one rapid glance, and then strode forward, crashing the fallen leaves beneath his tread.

Savella looked up, uttered a faint cry, and Philip sprang to his feet to confront the angry face that glared on him with bitter contempt.

"So—o—Mr. Vane condescends to amuse his leisure hours by attempting to beguile another unsuspecting heart to love him. I ask you, sir, if it is the part of an honourable man to enter my grounds without my knowledge, and meet my niece in this clandestine manner?"

Philip recovered his natural audacity, and he coolly said:

"My first meeting with Miss Fontaine was accidental, I assure you. Since that happened, as I was no longer a welcome visitor in your house, I have availed myself of such chances as offered themselves to see your niece. To-morrow I should have waited on you to offer my proposals in form, as Miss Fontaine has just honoured me by accepting me as her future husband."

Fontaine listened to this address in indignant surprise. He turned to his niece and sternly asked:

"Savella, can this be true? Have you so recklessly disobeyed my express wishes as to suffer your heart to be won by a man I assured you would never be acceptable to me?"

She looked up appealingly, and faltered:

"Oh, Uncle Claude, I loved Philip from the first moment I saw him. It was my fate, and I could not evade it. I know that I have done wrong; but he loves me, and—and I will never marry any one but him."

Her uncle scornfully said:

"Doubtless Mr. Vane has induced you to believe that he adores you; but it is not very long since he came to me and professed the same feelings for another. I cannot understand the facility with which his affections have been transferred from her to you; yet why do I say so? for I am afraid that I do comprehend it but too well."

"Philip never loved Isola," Savella passionately exclaimed. "He has told me so, and I believe him."

A glance of contempt from Fontaine's eyes flashed over Philip.

He almost cowered beneath it; but he retained sufficient self-control to speak calmly.

"Miss Fontaine speaks the truth, sir; it was but a fancy I had for another, but for Savella I feel the only true affection I have ever known. I do not regret this discovery, as it affords me the opportunity

I have some time desired, to express my real sentiments."

"Philip Vane, your audacity passes beyond all bounds," said Fontaine, haughtily. "Do you suppose that I am not aware how much your professions are worth? Can I not measure your worldly soul by its just standard? Savella, when this man learned that Isola would not inherit my property, he deserted her; and in this brief space of time he professes to have attached himself to you with a degree of ardour unfelt for her. Judge for yourself if he would not be equally faithless to you if the smiles of fortune should forsake you."

"Oh! uncle Claude," pleaded Savella, "do not speak so, for I love him—I love him, I tell you! and I shall die if I am separated from him! No, no—he never loved Isola; he loves me, me—only me!"

There was such a burst of passionate feeling in her voice, that Fontaine was touched. He more gently said:

"Poor child! you, too, must suffer from the pelfish of a man whose great personal attractions are his only recommendation. But I must save you from him, Savella, at all hazards."

Then turning toward Philip Vane, he went on:

"Mr. Vane, if anything could have added to the distaste I have for you, it is the knowledge that in this underhand manner you have attempted to win your way into my family. I decline accepting you as a suitor to my niece, and in time, I believe she will be induced to listen to reason, and give up a man who, I am convinced, seeks her for her worldly advantages alone."

"Speak, Savella," said Philip, hesitantly; "shall it be so? You are not dependent upon your uncle. Your inheritance is your own; and I am sufficiently independent in fortune to lift me above the suggestion of the interested motives which Mr. Fontaine has imputed to me. I have told you that I love you; you are aware of the real nature of the obstacle that lies between us; and you have seen that Isola now only regards me in the light of an old friend. Accept or reject me at once, for on your decision now rests our future relation to each other."

His magnetic eyes were fixed upon her—his strong will enthralled her, and she made a step forward, laid her hand in his, and fervently said:

"Philip, I believe in your truth—in the nobility of your soul, and I will love you to the end. Opposition will only strengthen my resolve to be yours—yours through all."

"You hear, sir!" said Philip, triumphantly. But Fontaine, with a gesture of haughty disdain, drew Savella away from him, and held her to his side by throwing his arm around her.

"Philip Vane," he sternly said, "I am responsible for the welfare of my brother's child till she has attained years of discretion. I am her legal guardian, and, until she is of age, her fortune is under my control. To you I will never surrender a penny till that time expires; and I forbid you to approach her as a suitor. In the interim, if she does not discover for herself how false and hollow are your professions of love, she will possess but little of the foresight of the race from which she sprang. There lies your path, sir, and here lies ours. I could wish that they might never cross again in this life. Good evening. Come, Savella, the sun is sinking, and we are far from home."

He would have drawn her away, but she eluded his clasp, sprang toward Philip, and burying her head in his bosom, exclaimed with passionate fervour:

"Oh! my Philip—my beloved, my adored—believe him not. My heart will be true to you; they shall never, never separate me from you! I will close my ears and heart to every insinuation against you. We shall find means to meet, we shall be happy together yet."

"I believe so, my precious Savella—my plighted bride, my future wife," he tenderly responded; and when Fontaine approached, and forcibly drew Savella from his embrace, he defiantly said:

"Leave us, Mr. Vane; your promises are nothing to me; and if this unhappy girl refuses to listen to her best friends, she will surely plunge into a sea of wretchedness, from which no effort of mine can extricate her. A few weeks of happy illusion, followed by years of neglect and misery, must be her inevitable fate as your wife."

He again encircled the form of Savella with his strong arm, and almost supported her faltering steps as he moved away with her. She looked back at Philip as long as it was possible to do so, and the expression of her eyes confirmed what her lips had first uttered.

Philip watched them a few moments, and then a triumphant smile broke over his lips. He muttered:

"I have paid you back for your insulting dismissal of my pretensions to Isola, and I will repay you for this. That girl will blindly do what I bid her; I told her fate in the hollow of my hand, and she

is happy or miserable, she shall yet become my wife."

Then he fell into a fit of musing.

"How lovely Isola looked this morning when I ventured to call at the Vale; and how coldly she treated me. She was as self-possessed as if I had never been anything to her. I could see Miss Carleton watching us, or I might have ventured on an allusion to the past. I wonder how she would have received it? Oh, how I wish the Italian had never come between us! She loves like a tigress, and I know she will be desperately jealous if I even speak to another woman. Heigho! fate played me a shabby trick when she forced me to exchange the true gold for a poor counterfeit. Yet I am a wretch to think thus of poor Savella. Poor! no—rich—rich in youth, in passion, in the possession of the whole Fontaine estate. Philip Vane, you are a fool, and an ungrateful one, too, to dare to think thus."

He strode toward the tree to which his horse was fastened, and mounting, dashed off in the direction of Durlow, to tell his mother how he had sped in his wooing.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Flood with the sea, and reason down the wind,
Yet thou shalt never restrain me.

In the meantime, Fontaine moved in the direction of the house, still sustaining Savella, but after proceeding a short distance, she extricated herself from his arm, and resentfully said:

"I am quite able to walk alone, uncle. I do not wish to be too burdensome to you."

He regarded her more in sorrow than in anger, as he gravely said:

"I have never felt that you are a burden to me, Savella. I have indulged the hope that you would prove a blessing and a comfort to me; but what I have just witnessed has so deeply shaken my faith in you, that I have many misgivings for the future. My child, have you not been taught that duplicity is a deadly sin toward those who love you? I would not have believed that you could so forget the delicacy and reticence of a refined woman as to meet in secret with a lover of whom you were aware I could never approve."

"And why will you not approve him?" she impetuously burst forth. "He is all that a reasonable person can ask—noble in mind, beautiful as a demigod, attached to me tenderly. I love him, Uncle Claude; I tell you again that I love him to such a degree that I would cling to him even in death. Deception was forced on me, because he was not welcome in your house. We first met by accident, but afterward, I confess that I again sought that spot every afternoon that I might look upon him, from whom you nor any one else shall sever me."

Fontaine saw that in her present state of excitement remonstrance would be useless, and he only said:

"I shall take care that these clandestine meetings shall take place no more. If you marry Philip Vane, it must be without my consent, for it will never be given to such a union. To-morrow, if you were bereft of fortune, he would desert you; I can place no confidence in a man who has proved himself as unprincipled as he has."

Savella turned on him with flashing eyes and panting breath.

"Uncle, hear me, and feel that I speak the truth. I shall die if I am separated from Philip. I love him to that degree, that if I had the certainty that my wealth could purchase his hand, I would give my last pound to gain it, hoping that, in time, my devotion would meet its reward. But I know that you wrong him, for he has given me such proofs of his attachment, that I should be base to doubt him."

"Very lately he gave the same to another," replied Fontaine, "and do you think that in the brief space of three months a heart worth having can detach itself from its first love and enshrine a second idol in its place?"

"He never truly loved Isola. He has told me of the fascination she at one time exercised over him, but until he saw me his heart was never really touched. I know that I am not as lovely as Isola, but it is not the most beautiful women that are the best beloved."

"Are you aware that Philip and Isola have grown up together? that he has been attached to her from her childhood?"

"Yes—I know that they were partially educated together, and that he regarded her as a sister. Boys and girls who are reared together rarely fall in love with each other."

"I am afraid these two did, in spite of Philip's protestations to the contrary; but Isola is far beyond his reach now. She has nobly redeemed herself from the blight of such love as his, since she learned to comprehend Philip's true character. You are yet too young to marry any one, Savella; at seventeen a girl often accepts a lover who at twenty would

scarcely be permitted to approach her in that character. Give me a promise that you will wait till you have attained that age before bestowing your hand on Mr. Vane, and I pledge myself that if you are both still faithful to each other, I will withdraw my opposition to your union."

Savella's face brightened, and she warmly said: "You are my own good uncle Claude again! But I must consult with Philip; without his consent I have no right to bind myself by such a promise. I have consented to marry him, and if he is dissatisfied to wait so long, I cannot do what will make him unhappy. If he should get angry and desert me, I should perish in your sight. Oh, uncle, you do not know how dearly I love him."

"Poor, deluded child!" said Fontaine, compassionately, "is there no possibility of saving you? Will you rush headlong upon the cruel fate that will shatter your life? Savella, hear me; you shall not marry Philip Vane while I possess any legal power over you. You are my child now, and I must guard you from yourself."

Savella disdainfully repeated:

"Shall not!" and walked on beside him in utter silence till they gained the house. Springing up the steps, she swept rapidly past Somerton and her aunt, who were watching for their return. Senora Roselli comprehensively regarded Fontaine, and said:

"I hope Savella has been doing nothing to displease you, Claude. I am accustomed to the outbursts of her temper, but I hoped she would be on her guard with you."

Fontaine moved toward the window of the library, which was open, and said:

"Come in here, madam. I have a communication of very serious import to make to you, and I trust you will aid me in impressing on my niece the necessity of submitting to my authority."

An alarmed glance was exchanged between the two, and making a rapid sign to Somerton, Senora Roselli passed into the room and closed the door after her.

"Madam," said Fontaine, "I hope what I have to tell you will be a surprise to you. I trust that you have not encouraged my niece to disobey my wishes with regard to young Vane. When they have met at the houses of my friends, have you remarked that his attentions to her were those of a lover?"

"Certainly not. They have not been so marked as those of half-a-dozen other gentlemen; and I have not thought of him in that light. I trust that Savella has not given him encouragement to hope for success."

"On the contrary, they are plighted lovers. I went out this afternoon to seek my niece, and found her with Philip Vane. They have thus met for many weeks past, and she openly declares her determination to marry him."

His eyes were fixed upon her face, and he saw from its expression that she was even more dismayed at this discovery than he had been. She vehemently exclaimed:

"She shall not, she must not mar her destiny in such a manner! The false girl! How completely she has deceived me! She has spoken of this Vane so openly—condemned his conduct so freely—that I never imagined she had any regard for him."

"Regard is a faint word, madam, in this case. Savella cherishes a headlong passion for him, and, unless we find means to restrain her, she will rush into his arms in defiance of us all. She has told me as much herself."

In her anger the signora forgot her usual caution. She violently said:

"I will lock her up. I will give her only bread and water to live on till she comes to her senses. How dare she defy me thus?"

"Softly—softly, madam. In my house I cannot permit such extreme measures to be used; nor are they often of much avail. By tenderness and persuasion this headstrong girl may be led to do what is right; but she will never be driven into terms. I am glad to see that you are as much opposed to such a union as I am, and I ask you to use your influence to bring her back to reason. Just now the glamour of passion obscures all sense of right in her mind."

"I pledge myself to do it; I will aid you in every possible way, for Savella is yet too young to give her hand to any one," she more coolly said. "I was so astonished and exasperated by her duplicity that I expressed myself too strongly. I ask your pardon, Mr. Fontaine, for speaking of your niece as I did. I forgot the respect due to her position."

He arose and said:

"We understand each other now with reference to this affair. Be gentle with Savella, I entreat, for she is in a state of excitement that will not bear increasing. If we win her over at all, it must be through kindness."

"I shall remember; I will go to her at once."

As the signora passed out a figure fitted from the

outside of the door, and she found Somerton waiting her in the hall. He spoke rapidly in Italian:

"I overheard all; and the wretched girl has baffled all our plans. I tell you that you may as well speak to the raging winds when the storm is at its height and command them to cease blowing; as to hope to wrest Savella from the man on whom she has set her heart. Why have you not kept a stricter watch over her?"

"Have I not done my best? But she has basely deceived me from the first. I once accused her of attempting to attract this Vane, and she asserted that she only wished to avenge his desertion of Isola by drawing him on to a proposal which she would reject. Yet she has secretly met him; she has promised to marry him. Oh! but he talks of gentleness, tenderness, and all that namby-pamby stuff. He don't know Savella as we do, or he would adopt more stringent measures."

"Why, what can any of us do? If she will marry him, she will, you know as well as I do. I tell you we had best make up our minds to keep fair with Vane, for he will reap the reward of all we have done for her. Let him purchase our consent to the marriage, by a sufficient annuity, to enable us to return to Italy and live in comfort there. We do not care particularly about leaving Savella behind, I am sure."

"Why do you talk thus?" she fiercely asked. "With my consent, Savella shall never marry him nor any other man in this stupid country. As a last resource to prevent it, I will—"

She paused and regarded him fixedly. Somerton understood the meaning of that look, and hastily said:

"You will do no such thing. You would ruin all, for that would be fatal to our hopes. I know it would, and if you attempt such a thing, I will desert a sinking ship, and you may swim to shore if you can."

After a few moments of thought, her passion abated, and she replied:

"I believe you are right. Such a course would be injudicious; so I must go up to her, but not to soothe her, and play patience, as Mr. Fontaine recommends. I fancy if he could witness some of the scenes between us, he would be astonished; but not so much at my violence as at Savella's, for he knows me of old; but he has yet to learn that she is as turbulent in her temper as ever I have been."

"Do not let your anger get the better of your prudence this time," was his parting caution, as Senora Roselli left him to seek the apartment of her niece.

She found Savella walking up and down the floor weeping, and wringing her hands as if in despair.

The senora advanced deliberately towards her, and stood confronting her. Their eyes met, and Savella imperiously said:

"Get out of my path; don't come near me now, for I am not in a mood to be talked to now by any one."

"And least of all by me," was the cool rejoinder. "But I have come here to speak with you, and I mean to do it. If you are Claude Fontaine's heiress, you are also the child I rescued from poverty, and reared as my own. If you owe him nothing, you owe me a debt you can never repay, yet you are making no effort to do so. You are circumventing me at every turn, and running contrary to my dearest wishes. You know that I would sooner lay you in your grave than have you marry in this dull country, yet you have practised the vilest deceit toward me, and you are ready to throw yourself away on this insignificant Vane, because he has a pretty face, and talks nonsense to you. I expected more from you than this stupidity, Savella."

The girl listened to this torrent of words with a curling lip and frowning brow:

"I do not know why you should have expected better fruit from the training I have received. You have taught me nothing good—nothing true. To serve your interests and my own was the one idea inculcated, to the exclusion of every other. I have always yielded to you till now; but in this I will not be dictated to. I am rich—Philip Vane loves me, and the man I have chosen shall not be frowned on by you, if he is by my uncle."

"This defiance to my face! How dare you speak to me thus, you wretched girl!" Her passion choked her, and Savella retorted:

"I am not wretched—I am supremely blessed in the love I have accepted with my whole heart; and I defy you, Mr. Somerton, my uncle, the whole world, to break my plighted troth! You have the truth now, Aunt Bianca, and you are welcome to make the most of it."

Senora Roselli threw herself upon a chair, trembling with the rage that filled her. After a struggle with herself, she again spoke:

"The proverb which says, 'Put a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride to the devil one,' is fully illustrated in your case. But 'w' me you would have been reared in poverty and ignorance. I stifled myself to support and educate you for the position I hoped you would

some day fill; and now you turn on me and defy me. But I have power over your fate of which you are not aware, and if you persist in this insanity, I may be driven to use it. In such an extremity, I do not know what I may not be tempted to do."

Savella listened to her last words with evident incredulity. She proudly said:

"I owe you something for the sacrifices you say you have made on my account, but money can repay you for them. I am not a niggard, and you shall have back tenfold what you have spent on me. In my childhood you tyrannized over me; you bent me to your will by the strong hand of oppression; but I am now free to set as I please, and I refuse any longer to be dictated to by you. Use the power at which you hint, and see how easily I will baffle it."

The senora began to comprehend that Fontaine was right; if Savella was won over it must be through persuasion; and she most unwillingly changed her tactics. She burst into tears, and sobbed:

"I hoped that some tenderness for me, who have been more than a mother to you, was left in your heart, Savella; but I see that I was mistaken. You think only of yourself, and I am nothing to you. If I have the power to injure you, I would never exert it, you know full well, and that is why you treat me thus. It will break my heart to see you make so contemptible a marriage as this, when so brilliant a career lies before you. Only consent to be guided by me for a few months, and I promise everything that your heart can desire."

"It desires but one thing, and that you have set yourself against. I know that you wish to secure my property, and to return to Italy; but my uncle will not surrender it till I am of age, and I no longer desire to leave this country. Your aspirations toward a union with a man of high rank in Italy have no attractions for me. I would refuse the hand of an emperor if Philip Vane held out his little finger to me and said 'come with me.' I would go to him—I would cling to him, and glory in my choice."

Senora Roselli was in despair. She arose and said:

"Dull and obstinate, I have always known you to be, but this stupidity surpasses belief. The man will squander the money for which he is ready to sell himself, and break your heart by his indifference. All my efforts to restore you to your rights will only end in consummating your wretchedness. But I will, at least, perform my duty toward you. You will be permitted to walk out no more alone, and the most watchful duenna was never more rigid in her guardianship than I will be over you. Your uncle has delegated this task to me, and I shall perform it with a strictness which will leave you no chance to communicate with your lover."

Savella smiled disdainfully:

"Perform your part of the comedy, Aunt Bianca; but do not forget that 'love laughs at locksmiths.' I shall find the means to communicate with Philip in spite of you. You cannot shut me up, and keep me entirely out of society. If I am no longer met him in the woodland, I can see him in the houses I visit; as I have hitherto done. Give up this contention, aunt, and leave me to take my own way, for I warn you that I will have it at the risk of my life."

"Hard-hearted, ungrateful girl!" burst from the lips of the enraged senora, and she rushed from the room to seek her confidant, and inform him of what had passed in the interview.

Savella looked her door, washed away the traces of her tears, and sat down beside the window to contemplate a miniature of Philip which he had that day given her.

She refused to appear at supper, and spent the time, till a late hour, in writing to Philip an account of all that had passed since she had parted from him, trusting to some chance to deliver it to him, in spite of the surveillance with which she was threatened.

(To be continued.)

THE OTHER WEEK the Protestant monks of Norwich made a pilgrimage to the celebrated well of St. Walsstan, at Bawburgh, whose waters are supposed to have wonderful properties. An old well has been the scene of such pilgrimages, and is likely again to be a spot of interest, it will be proper to state that it is situated in the little village of Bawburgh, or Anbur, about four miles from Norwich, and a short distance from Taverham. The well is about three feet in diameter, about the same in depth, situated in an orchard; it is lined with flint stones, and between these stones a most peculiar kind of moss is found, which, though black in appearance when gathered, soon turns to a beautiful green colour. The moss is supposed to possess curative properties of no ordinary kind, and many country people still believe that the water of the well is efficacious in many diseases. To this place the monks wended their way in grand procession as to the shrine of one of their chief saints. Beneath a gorgeous canopy Father Ignatius, who was clothed in a

gold and white satin cope, and surrounded by the "brethren" of the order, bearing a great variety of banners, and followed by three little children, bearing the banner of the Guardian Angel, proceeded to the holy well, where, with candles burning, censers swinging, and amid fumes of incense, the Superior sang aloud, "We praise thee, O God!" the audience falling on their knees to kiss the holy earth, after which they were all sprinkled with the water, singing, "Sprinkle me, O Lord, and I shall be clean," &c. The well was then incensed, and a large number of candles lighted, and after a short lecture by the "Father," vespers were begun, and the scene was very imposing, and, doubtless, entertaining to the rustics. The service having been concluded, a perfect rush took place for the moss, and every scrap was torn from the well. The procession then returned to Norwich.

EXPECTED NAVAL ENGAGEMENT OFF CHERBOURG.

The correspondent at Cherbourg of the *Shipping Gazette* states that a new naval battle was expected off that port, as it was stated that the Confederate Florida was outside waiting for the Kearsarge. The Federal man-of-war Niagara, which had been at Antwerp, is known to have received orders to proceed to Cherbourg. After the sinking of the Alabama, special instructions were given on the part of the Confederate authorities to look after the Kearsarge, but whether the Florida is a match for that ship remains to be seen. The Niagara is double the tonnage of either the Kearsarge or the Florida, and she is to be reinforced shortly by the arrival of the Macedonia.

A CHINESE GENTLEMAN'S HOME.

OUR belles who aspire to the honour of presiding over mansions, may not have any objections to a glimpse of foreign style and elegance. A correspondent from China sends home the following description of an Oriental residence:—

He took us to his country house, now uninhabited. It was the perfect residence of a Chinese gentleman. There was a very large garden, with bamboo hedges and large fish-tanks, edged with walls of blue bricks and perforated tiles. His pigs were in admirable condition, and as beautiful as the Prince Consort's at Windsor.

About the grounds were nutmegs, mangosteens, plantains, coconuts, darcins, and small creepers, trained into baskets and pagodas. Inside the house the drawing-rooms had doors sliding across circular openings.

We went on to this gentleman's private residence, entered by a Chinese triumphal gate. He tells me he has ten miles of carriage-road round his estate. It is on a fine, undulating tract of land, reclaimed from the jungle, and laid out with rare taste. In the outskirts a tiger killed a man; the other day. In his garden I found Jacko living in a cane cage, next door to a porcupine; there were also some rare birds. Further on some Brahmin bulls, a Cashmere goat, and a family of young kangaroos.

There were all sorts of unknown beautiful flowers, placed about in enormous vases. Here I first saw the tea-plant growing. It is of the camellia tribe, three or four feet high, perhaps, and bears a small white flower, like an open dog-rose. Also I was shown the "moon flower," a kind of round convolvulus that opens at night.

There was a bower of "monkey caps," the pitcher-flower, which collects water, and from which Jacko refreshes himself in the jungles.

The fan-palm produced water by being pierced with a penknife, of a clear, cold quality. Several minute creepers were trained over wire forms to imitate dragons, with egg-shells for their eyes; and there were many of the celebrated dwarf-trees—the first I had seen—little oaks and elms, eighteen inches high, like small, withered, old men. The house was superbly furnished in the English style, but with lanterns all about it.

At six the guests arrived—mostly English—all dressed in short white jackets and trousers. The dinner was admirably served in good London style, and all the appointments, as regarded plate, glass, wines, and dishes, perfect. The quiet, attentive waiting of the little Chinese boys deserved all praise.

After dinner we lounged through the rooms, decorated with English prints of the royal family, statuettes, "curiosos" from every part of the world, and rare objects in jade and cracked China.

DISCOVERY OF ROMAN REMAINS AT CHEDWORTH.

About two years ago Thomas Margette, a game-keeper on the estate of Lord Eldon, at Chedworth, noticed in a rabbit-warren a small portion of Roman pavement, but at the time did not consider it of sufficient moment to call attention to it. A few days ago, however, he observed that the soil had been still fur-

ther removed by the rabbits, and that a large portion of the pavement was exposed to view. He communicated the facts to Mr. Farr, one of his lordship's trustees, who immediately ordered excavations to be made, which have resulted in the discovery of three distinct rooms, the floors of which are in a beautiful state of preservation. One of the rooms measures 36 feet long by 19½ feet wide, and the design of the pavement consists of a vase and flowers, surrounded by a border. The representation of a man holding in his hand a hare or leveret is clearly brought out. In another room, not quite so large as the first, is the figure of a youth holding in one hand a bird, and in the other a buck's horn; while in the third room a font has been discovered, which leads to the presumption that the building has been used by the Romans as a place of worship. The workmen are still actively engaged.

THE MYSTERIES OF HORSE COUPING.

AMONGST the mysteries of horse-flesh is the noble science of coupling, and its practitioners the horse-couplers. These individuals practise fraud as a trade, and in order to do so, they are obliged to pass through an apprenticeship as severe as that undergone by Fagan's school of young pickpockets.

Your accomplished horse-coupler must possess a shrewd knowledge of men to begin with; and, secondly, he must know horse-flesh well, especially that portion of it in which he deals—the genus screw. He must be to his charges what Madame Rachel is to her old dowagers—able to restore them to youth, and make them "beautiful for ever," or at least for the half-hour during which it is necessary the screw should put in a good appearance before his purchaser.

The horses upon which couplers operate are generally nags—such as hunters, roadsters, and carriage horses. The getting up of these old screws is the first care of the coupler when they come into his hands. "The Adam," for instance, has to be rejuvenated, and in order to accomplish this he has to undergo three processes—bishopsing, gypping, and puffing his glims.

The first is the method of imitating the mouth-marks of a young horse, so called after the name of the original rogue who put it in practice.

All old horses have their incisor teeth of an immense length, and they always slant out at a most acute angle: to do away with this mark of antiquity they are filed down to about the ordinary length of a five-year-old, and the dark marks which are always present in these teeth in young horses are made with a red-hot iron, and by the aid of a graving tool, mouth-marks are engraved so as to imitate nature.

The few grey hairs which are scattered about the animal are all reduced to the general colour by means of a paste corresponding in tint with that of the natural coat, a process termed gypping.

Finally, those deep indentations which appear over the eyes of all ancient animals are obliterated by pricking the skin in different places, and blowing air into the cavity underneath. The holes immediately close, and a smooth brow is obtained, which is not easily detected.

The make-up is just as effective, and perhaps more so, to mere novices in horse-flesh, than is that of the toilet of many *passé* ladies who manage to make a good market in the world.

"The Knock," or lame horse, an incurable screw, afflicted with disease of the navicular joint, or shoulder lameness, neither of which make any outward show, is a great favourite for horse-coupling purposes, as he is often a fine-looking animal. The manner in which the lameness is disguised is to take off the shoe from the sound foot, place a pebble or horse-bean between it and the sole of the foot, and nail it on again. A corresponding lameness is thus produced in both feet, and by this means the original defect is masked.

CAPTAIN WINSLOW, of the Kearsarge, has asked for the extradition of the men belonging to the Alabama's crew rescued by the French pilot-boats. M. Bonfil, commercial agent to the Alabama, calmly tells him in reply to ask the French Government, but "is not aware of any law of war which would prevent a soldier from escaping from a field of battle after a defeat, even should he have already been made prisoner, and he does not see why a sailor should not do the same by swimming." So clear is the right of rescue, that its counterpart, the right to put prisoners to death if dangerous to the capturing army, has in theory been always acknowledged.

WEDDINGS IN THE OLDEN TIME.—Let us fancy, then, that the bells have ceased ringing on some day, in "Great Eliza's golden time." The ring has been given, the prayers said, the marriage declared, the blessing pronounced. The bride and bridegroom with flushed faces, followed by paranymp and groomsmen and bridesmaids, pass out of the chancel, and seat themselves in the body of the church. The priest

goes up into the pulpit. It is Henry Smith "the silver-tongued." He will give us a derivation of the word marriage:—"In all nations the day of marriage was reputed the joyfulest day in all their life, and is reputed still of all, as though the sunne of happiness began that day to shine upon us when a good wife is brought unto us." Here we may imagine the glance of the bride's father and mother toward their son-in-law. "Therefore, one saith," the preacher goes on, "that marriage doth signify *merrie-ags*, because a playfellow is come to make our age merrie." At a marriage in 1592 many of the congregation would have been quickly weary of the best sermon. There was such merriment awaiting them outside the church when the preacher had done. In 1592 there was no wide quarrel between religion and merry-making. "Serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song," was the characteristic of English Churchmanship up to the period of the Great Rebellion. It was the triumph of Puritanism which divorced religion and merry-making. The divorce has continued to our time. Piety is half afraid of mirth, and mirth still suspects piety. The Church has lost the position she once held as the sanctifier and ennobler of social life in the sphere of common joy and amusement. But it is a position that she must recover, that she is recovering, as she learns again what it is to be a National Church, the church of families, and of all trades and occupations.

THE DOUBLE WEDDING.

CHAPTER I.

MARGARET BRANDE stood in the hall of Cedarwild and shivered as the cold autumnal rain beat against the draggled roses on the trellises.

She wondered if those drowned flowers had hearts to suffer and feel the pain which that slow death creeping over them gave to her. She wondered if vaguely they did not endure distress for this crushing out of their life and fragrance.

It was a wild wet night, and the desolate country lying round about—hemmed in by ragged lines of hills, and intersected by sluggish waters—gave little comfort to her loneliness.

She saw through the gloom no hope of better things. No promise of sunshine in the morning. She drew her heavy shawl up over her shoulders—and closing the door, returned to the light and warmth within.

An immense fire burned on the antique ample hearth, blazing up the wide chimney, but hardly dispelling the grey shadows hovering in the corners of the spacious apartment.

Styx, the great dog lying on the rug, arose at her entrance, acknowledged her presence by a low whine of satisfaction, and subsided again to slumber.

The wind howled shrilly around the house, and through the wood at the foot of the garden, and the rain beat in torrents against the windows.

Margaret drew up to the fire, as though seeking companionship from its warmth, and let the red light drift flickeringly over her.

You would hardly have called her handsome, and yet you would readily have confessed that you had seen no other woman like her. Descriptions are tame things, and never convey correct ideas. Like photographs, they give us only the cold negative, and leave to our imaginations the task of filling the blank with the pleasant lights and shades of life and loveliness.

Miss Brande was rather tall, well developed; somewhat irregularly featured, with dark hazel eyes, black hair, and age of twenty-five.

And Miss Brande had lived that number of years and was still unmarried.

For five years she had dwelt alone at Cedarwild, having only her servants for company.

She had secluded herself from society, and given no strangers an invitation to the gloomy grandeur of her house.

The knowledge they had of her painful family history should have made them lenient; but few were endowed with sufficient sensibility to understand the fine delicacy of pride which kept her from mingling with others of her kind after the stigma fell upon the house of Brande.

When Margaret was seventeen, a fearful tragedy had transpired at Cedarwild.

At that time the family consisted of Squire Brande, his wife, their two children, Margaret and Vincent, and Victoria Raynor, Mrs. Brande's youngest sister.

Miss Raynor was about thirty years of age—handsome, haughty, and the possessor of a large fortune. She had been a belle in her day, but of all her suitors she had selected none for a husband.

Vincent Brande was her prime favourite. It was rumoured that her will was made entirely in his favour, to the utter exclusion of Margaret.

One night the household had been aroused by piercing shrieks proceeding from Miss Raynor's

chamber, and on forcing the door, which was fastened on the inside, she was found dead in her bed. Murdered! there was not a doubt of it.

The criminal had evidently escaped through the window—for it was standing open, and there were marks of blood on the sill.

It would be wearying to enter into details, but suspicion pointed to Vincent Brande as the murderer. He was absent from the terror-stricken group gathered in the chamber of blood—he remained absent all the succeeding day, and when he returned, haggard and worn, as though with a long journey, no explanation of his ominous absence could be obtained.

Various little circumstances, trifling in themselves alone considered, served to fasten suspicion more firmly upon him, and when the will of the deceased lady was opened, and found to contain the unreserved bequest of all her wealth to Vincent Brande, the public were in doubt no longer.

Young Brande's arrest was demanded, but when the authorities reached Cedarwild for that purpose, the bird had flown. And, although diligent search had been made, and large rewards for his apprehension had been offered, he had not been heard of since, and Victoria Raynor's murder remained unavenged.

From this time forth the fortunes of the family underwent a rapid change. Squire Brande, always a proud, aristocratic gentleman, setting no small value on his unsullied lineage, could ill bear the sympathizing curiosity of his friends, and the bitter taunts of his enemies. He sank beneath the disgrace that had come upon him, and fourteen brief months after the murder, they found him dead in his chair by the library window.

Mrs. Brande was thrown from a carriage on the very day of her husband's funeral, as she was returning from laying him in the tomb of his ancestors, and was injured so fearfully, that her death was not long delayed.

Margaret mourned her parents deeply and passionately, but hers was one of those quiet natures, which give no outward sign.

Keenly sensitive, and rendered doubly so by the bereavement she had passed through, the curious eye of the world hurt her—pierced her to the soul, and from the retirement of her mourning days she came forth no more.

She settled down among the shadows of Cedarwild, and lived her eventless life alone.

Romance, such as comes from love, she had had none. No lovers had ever come to her. She had dreamed vaguely enough of what existence might have been, but she never indulged a hope that it might be realized in this world.

She was a woman, and at times such wild longings rose up in her soul—such a fierce rebellion against the hard fate that had doomed her to suffer shipwreck.

This night her sombre train of thought was disturbed by the entrance of a servant with a note.

Margaret glanced over it, wondering who had taken the trouble to write to her.

The address was in an unfamiliar hand, and the surprise expressed on her face as she perused the closely-written sheet, told that the contents were entirely unexpected.

It is not necessary to transcribe the letter in full—a brief glimpse at its tidings will answer all purposes.

It came from a paternal aunt of Margaret Brande's—written on her death-bed, and committed to the care and kindness of her niece, Hope Everest, the sole remaining treasure of the writer.

With all the earnest solemnity of a dying woman, Mrs. Everest charged Margaret to be faithful to the trust, and watch over the young orphan as over a sister.

Hope would not be destitute of fortune, but she lacked friends, and her mother knew of no one among her scattered relatives to whom she would so readily bequeath her as Miss Brande.

For some years the Everests had led a roving life—seeking vainly for health and strength for this dying mother, and now the end was nigh.

The letter closed abruptly here, and was finished and superscribed by another hand.

Mrs. Everest was dead, and Hope would follow this messenger immediately to Cedarwild.

A dull pain surged up into Margaret's heart. This prospect of companionship—she scarcely knew whether to take it kindly or not. It would be so hard to break up the accustomed routine. A young girl, barely eighteen—so said the letter—would be wanting gay company—she would visit, and invite visitors; the serenity that had so long reigned at Cedarwild would be effectually broken up.

But she never thought of refusing this desolate orphan the shelter of her home.

The next day was a busy one in the old house, so long unaccustomed to bustle of any kind.

The guest chambers were opened, swept, and bright-

ened with late flowers—Hope should have the choice of them all, Margaret said to herself. It being certain that she was coming, nothing should be wanting to make her content.

Night came—the night on which Hope Everest was expected, and Margaret found herself awaiting the arrival with an almost feverish impatience. She had formed such a fair ideal of the youthful stranger, and was so apprehensive of being disappointed.

The air was clear and cold, and there were streaks of gold and crimson in the sky. A few stars burst their glory through the blue, and afar in the west the new moon hung just above the rugged line of hills that hemmed in the valley.

No more favourable time could Hope Everest have craved than this in which to catch the first glimpse of her new home.

A travelling carriage turned up the avenue. Miss Brande hurried down the steps to greet the stranger. A slight figure alighted, a pair of soft arms fell around Margaret's neck, and a warm, sweet mouth touched hers. Margaret trembled. No one had kissed her lips since her dying father left the last cold token of his love there.

"My dearest cousin Margaret!"

"You are Hope Everest?"

"Yes. And I have so longed to see you! They told me you were an old maid, but I am so glad to find a beautiful young lady instead! I shall love you dearly, and you will help me to be good, won't you?"

"I will try always to do my duty by you, dear Hope."

"But you will love me? oh, I shall die if somebody does not love me! Dear Margaret, I had only my mother, but she was so tender always! You will pity me when you remember how I must miss her, and you will love me, instead of her?"

Margaret put back the clouds of gold-coloured hair that had fallen from the confinement of her travelling hat, and touched her lips lightly to the fair forehead.

"Hope, you shall find in me a second mother."

CHAPTER II.

A GREAT change came over Cedarwild from the day of Hope's advent. She was like an atmosphere of June sunshine—everything about her insensibly partook of the spirit.

The old gardener astonished himself by whistling as he covered the tender carnations, and the great dog was beguiled from his solemn slumbers on the hearthrug, to a romp on the lawn with this rare young Hope.

Personally, Hope Everest was undeniably beautiful, but in a very opposite style from her stately cousin. She was fair, with rose colour in her cheeks and lips, clear blue eyes, curling yellow hair, and a slight graceful form.

Mrs. Everest had left the whole of her property to Hope. Margaret Brande was named as guardian, and in case Hope married without her full consent, one-half the inheritance reverted to the guardian, and the remainder was to be held in trust—its yearly interest to be devoted to the support of Hope and her heirs.

Mrs. Everest had entertained some very peculiar ideas in regard to marriage, which were explained at length in her will; and Hope, who held the memory of her mother sacred, was likely to govern herself accordingly.

Theodore Henderson, of Middlebury, was named executor, and when Hope had been a week in her new home, Mr. Henderson rode over to make her acquaintance.

Margaret had expected to see a grey-haired, middle-aged man; but Mr. Henderson was not more than thirty, with a calm, grave face, and a singularly prepossessing grace of manner. There was so much reserved power in his grey eyes, so much latent tenderness in the firm yet delicate lines of his mouth, that he could hardly fail to interest all women whom he chose to propitiate.

The conversation related chiefly, at first, to business, but after a time it turned to art and general literature, and time flew so rapidly that Mr. Henderson graciously accepted Miss Brande's invitation to stop to supper.

After this day, Cedarwild was opened to company.

Margaret, ever ready to promote the happiness of her cousin, sent for Miss Sterling. She came at once, accompanied by her brother Grant, and Henry Sedley, her betrothed husband.

The young men had not purposed to remain more than one night, but yielded to the cordial invitation of the hostess, and settled themselves for a visit of an indefinite length.

Helen Sterling was a belle and a beauty—a fashionable woman of the world, but by no means a heartless one.

Grant, her brother, was one of those rare individuals whom we are all glad to see at any and all times. He

had the faculty of adapting himself perfectly to the society he was in, and being handsome, and always good-humoured and refined—it is little wonder that he was a general favourite.

Henry Sedley was a somewhat common-place young fellow, preparing for a commercial life in the importing house of his father, who was a wealthy merchant.

The autumn weather continued fine and clear, and the young people at Cedarwild enjoyed it to the utmost. Although it was the last of October, the air was still warm and fragrant, and a few birds, loth to migrate, enlivened the shadowy woodlands.

Grant Sterling was the invariable companion of Hope. Mr. Henderson frequently managed to ride over from Middlebury and escort Margaret.

And Margaret, meanwhile, had grown pale and distraught. A something too nearly akin to pain to be satisfaction, crept over her when she saw Grant Sterling bending so low to button Hope's dainty glove, or turn the sheets of music when she was singing.

And when Margaret asked herself why she should care, she dared not look into her heart and read the answer there.

Was she looking for happiness for herself?

She put the suggestion away with scorn. At twenty-five a woman has no right to dream love-dreams, she said, bitterly.

Then another thought intruded. She held Hope's destiny partly in her own hands. Marrying without the consent of her guardian, Hope lost her inheritance.

This consideration might have influenced some women, but Margaret Brande was too noble and unworldly for anything of that sort. She said within herself that if Grant Sterling loved Hope, and asked her in marriage, her full approbation should not be wanting. Looking out of her window, she saw them walking up the garden path together. Hope's hand resting on Sterling's arm, while he fanned her mockingly with a branch of laurel.

Pale in spite of herself, Margaret went down to dinner.

Judge Henderson, who was spending the day at Cedarwild, remarked her abstraction.

"You are not well, Miss Brande?"

Margaret flushed slightly. It is pleasant to all women to be cared for.

"Quite well, thank you, only a little languid. A walk would benefit me. What do you say to a nutting expedition in the woods this afternoon?"

"Excellent! the very thing!" cried Hope. "I have been dying for a new sensation! Of course we'll go, won't we, Mr. Sterling?"

The gentlemen bowed low.

"Of course we will, when Queen Everest commands."

Hope's half-imposing manner had won for her this ambiguous title.

The party set out early. Henderson, as usual, attended Margaret, and Sterling went on ahead with Hope. Both were gay, and the life of the company, turning momentarily to give vent to some merry sallies that made all the sober woods alive with laughter.

When they reached the woods, the company divided, each one following the bent of his own fancy.

The soft wind sighed through the trees, and the sunlight drifted golden down through the crisping leaves.

Hope was kneeling—searching amid the dried grass and herbage for the hidden nuts, calling out gaily, now and then, to Margaret, who was near her.

Suddenly a piercing scream burst from the young girl, and turning quickly, Margaret flew to her side. She was still kneeling, her hands clasped together, her wild eyes fixed in terrible fascination on the form of a coiled snake not four feet in front of her.

Some instinct of heavenly pity for this girl, so young and beautiful, and so fearfully in peril, moved upon Margaret Brande. She put herself between Hope and the deadly reptile. There was one moment of fatal suspense. The snake lifted his head—his eyes gleamed like red lightning, and then—a shot rang through the air; the peril was past; the serpent lay dead; and Grant Sterling, flinging down his pistol, lifted Hope in his arms.

Margaret could not stay to hear the words he said to her, and when, a little afterwards, he brought her up to the horror-stricken company, frightened and pallid, clinging like a child to his arm for protection. Margaret almost shrank from the touch of Hope's hand on hers, and grew white as the girl herself, when Sterling's eyes met her own.

That night Miss Brande complained of a severe headache and retired early.

Hope came up to Mr. with her, and bathe her head, but was sent away immediately.

Margaret needed sleep. That would effect a cure. And Hope kissed her softly, and wonderingly, and returned to the drawing-room to trifle away the evening in gay small-talk with the gentlemen.

When she had gone, Margaret rose, looked the door

of her chamber, and flinging on a dressing-gown, sat down by the window. She threw open the lattice, that the cool air might blow on her hot face that burned crimson. Her lips were dry, and parched, her eyes dilated with feverish brightness.

What had she done? She asked herself the question, with shame and fear.

Unloving all her life, she had thought herself secure. Her heart, she had said, was too hard and cold for love to enter. And now—she could but confess it—her whole soul was given away—unasked—unsought—uncared for.

Her flushed face fell into her hands. Oh, that she had died before this thing had happened! Grant Sterling loved Hope. There was no longer any doubt of it. He had gone to her, only, in that hour of danger, his arms had closed only round her, he had cared for her safety alone.

Then, swift as lightning, came the thought of that solemn charge, written to her by Hope's dying mother. And she had promised to be a second mother to that friendless orphan. She lifted up her face; all heat and flush had gone out of it. The low-spoken words escaped her lips:

"Heaven helping me!"

A footstep sounded on the gravel path that ran under the window. A subdued voice spoke her name: "Margaret!"

She started as if struck with an electric shock, her hands tightly locked together, her wild eyes staring out into the gloom, from whence the sound had come. Again the voice called:

"Margaret!"

She stepped outside. The tall figure of a man wrapped in a heavy cloak, was outlined against the clear sky. She staggered back, as if seeking for support, lifting up her clasped hands towards him. He wound his arm round her, and carried, rather than led her to the shadow of a lime tree at the bottom of the garden.

An hour later, she stole back to the house, noiseless as a sheeted ghost, treading lightly, looking around her fearfully, and trembling like one with the ague at the sound of a dead leaf fluttering slowly down to the ground.

She was burdened with a terrible secret, obliged to wear a false countenance of smiles, when her heart was full of anguished fear. Day after day it was the same. Oh, how she longed for the olden quiet and solitude once more. If all those gay, careless creatures would but go away and leave her to herself!

The most unobservant of her guests could not fail to see that a strange unrest possessed the mistress of Cedarwild. Her former repose of manner had vanished, she started at the sound of an opening door, and the clatter of a horse's hoofs on the highway would bleach her face to the pallor of marble.

One cold, blustering night, when the whole household was wrapped in slumber, Margaret stole out into the shadow of the great wych elm. She thought herself unobserved, but Grant Sterling, pacing to and fro on the terrace, to rid himself of a nervous headache, heard her light footstep, and recognized her. He noticed her hurried manner, and saw that a man came forth from the shrubbery to meet her—saw that he took her in his arms and kissed her forehead. Grant Sterling set his teeth hard together, and smothered an exclamation. Honour prompted him to return to the house at once. He might have done so, but a suppressed cry from Margaret arrested him. He flew to the spot. For a moment the two men glared at each other through the dark. Margaret sprang between them.

"Mr. Sterling, let us go home," she said, with a sort of frightful calmness. He drew her hand within his arm. No word was spoken till they reached the door; then she turned and faced him.

"You have the power to destroy my peace of mind for ever. Grant Sterling, will you keep my secret? Will you speak or be silent?"

"Silent as the tomb."

Three days thereafter, when they rose from the tea-table, Margaret beckoned Mr. Sterling aside. He followed her into the library, and they stood within the shadow of the bay-window, just where her father had died.

She opened her lips to speak, but the gay voices of Hope and Helen at the door arrested what she was about to say. She spoke quickly and briefly:

"Will you meet me to-night, at eleven, at the foot of the garden?"

He bowed, and was showing her a new engraving when the girls entered.

There was music in the evening. Sterling played waltzes for Hope and Helen to practice some new steps, and Margaret and Mr. Sedley played chess. At ten they separated for the night. At eleven Margaret met Grant Sterling. She spoke low and rapidly.

"I have to-night pressing need of a faithful friend. There is no one in the world to whom I would so

readily commit my trust as to you. Will you accept it?"

"Thank you—yes."

"It is necessary that I should send a note and a considerable sum of money this very night. Do you know the position of the old house which goes by the name of Black Hall?"

"Very well. It bears the reputation of a haunted house."

"Yes. There is one in that house who is very dear to me. He is in danger. Tidings of that danger must be at once conveyed to him. It is fifteen miles to the hall, and to reach it one must pass through the village of Middlebury. A woman riding alone and unattended, if seen, might excite suspicion. I want you to take my black hunter, and this note, and this purse, ride to the hall, give all into the hands of him you will find there, and return here in the first up-train. None need know that you have been absent. You must knock thrice at the door of the hall, and say that Margaret Brande sent you. That is all. Do you comprehend?"

"Perfectly."

They clasped hands a moment, then she crept back to her chamber to watch until the dawn reddened the east, while he strode off to the stables.

When Sterling returned, Margaret flew down to admit him.

"It is all well," he said, in answer to her questioning face. "He is beyond pursuit. To-morrow at this time he will be on his way to America."

Still her wistful eyes asked something more.

Sterling divined what she disliked to say, and answered the unspoken question.

"No, Miss Brande; I do not know who the individual I have assisted is; I care not to know what name he is called by; that he is dear to you is sufficient."

"Oh, so very dear! Mr. Sterling; God grant that the time may come when I can confide wholly in you—nay, I feel sure that it will! I have suffered so much."

She checked herself, and passed down the hall. An expression of extreme pity went over Grant Sterling's face. He took a step after her—stopped—turned away, and went up to his chamber.

CHAPTER III.

THE month of December set in fine and bracing, and although there were prophecies of snow in the steel-blue sky, none had as yet fallen.

Miss Sterling's birthday occurred on the tenth of the month, and it was proposed to celebrate the event by a sail down the river.

Mr. Henderson owned a smart little craft—the Violet—and readily consented to join the party, and take them down in his yacht.

The tenth was fair and cool. A fine bracing air blew from the west, and a few light fleecy clouds floated lazily in mid air. Just such a day as a person of sound constitution rejoices in.

Mirth and hilarity reigned unrestrained on board the Violet during the passage down the river. Hope was in her wildest spirits—in fact she had been for some days either absurdly gay, or gloomily abstracted. Some foreign influence was evidently at work on the heart of the careless girl—something was changing her to a grave woman before her time.

How well it is that we do not see what the future holds in store for us! Else might we faint and fall before our full years were lived out and registered. Knowing just what we must meet between childhood and the grave, could we go on as we do now—hopefully, prayerfully, looking always for something better—could we go on and meet the fearful shape of Destiny which comes towards us slowly but surely, and which it is as impossible to avoid, as it is to thwart Death of his prey and live on earth a life immortal? Oh, it is a merciful hand that covers the future!

They cast anchor, and for a couple of hours amused themselves with wandering along the bank. Then there was the savoury lunch to be eaten, and a few gay songs to be sung, and it was the middle of the afternoon before they were ready to set sail for home.

Mr. Sterling and his sister, and Mr. Sedley, were to leave Cedarwild on the 12th; and the thought that perhaps this was the last excursion they should all undertake together, made them a little sad.

On board the yacht—the ladies retired to the little cabin; Henderson took the tiller—Sterling managed the sail—and Sedley, having nothing better to do, amused himself with smoking in the fore-cabin.

There was now a fresh breeze from the landward to contend with, and the Violet made but slow progress. By-and-by, the ladies came up to admire the heavy swell, and watch the distant breakers toss white on the shore.

Suddenly, Sterling left the deck and went below, to return in a moment pale and calm. He spoke a few words of direful import to Mr. Henderson, and the

faces of both the men were white as death. Sterling approached the ladies:

"I am sorry to alarm you—but the Violet is on fire below—our only safety lies in the boat."

"Great Heaven!" cried Sedley, "and that will hold only three with safety; a mere shell, never intended for use!"

Helen Sterling shrieked and clung to Mr. Sedley—Hope's face was hidden on Margaret's shoulder—only Sterling and Henderson acted.

Sedley remembered, with many self-reproaches, that he had thrown his still lighted cigar-stump down among the rubbish in the store-room, and that apparently trivial act had been the cause of the present calamity.

They got the boat into the water—a frail, toy concern, barely sufficient to sustain the weight of three persons, but it was the sole chance for preservation. And there were six to save. Who was to remain behind? The question suggested itself to every member of that little company with thrilling earnestness. There was no time for deliberation. Whatever was done must be done quickly. Grant Sterling stepped apart from the others.

"Into the boat at once, every one of you!" he cried, his eye burning with calm heroism; "if you are careful, it may support five of you. I shall remain behind, and when I can stay here no longer, trust my fate to the waves. I am a strong swimmer; it is possible I may reach the shore."

But Henderson demurred.

"It shall not be!" he cried, indignantly; "I will myself remain behind. Sterling, you have a sister; I have no near relatives; save yourself!"

Margaret, looking up from the tossing boat where they had placed her, grew cold as ice as she saw the look of stern determination on Sterling's face.

"Go!" he said, hoarsely; a moment's delay may be fatal!

"I will not!" exclaimed Henderson. "Do you take me for a pitiful coward?"

Sterling drew a pocket-pistol and coolly pointed it at the other's forehead.

"I know it is unmanly to take this advantage of you, my friend; but it is the only alternative. Refuse to save yourself, and I call heaven to witness I will shoot you dead!"

Henderson's proud eye fell before that of his friend. He let himself down into the boat.

"So be it, then," he said; "I accept my life from you—and may God preserve you!"

Sterling laid his hand on the rope-ladder to draw it up, but before he could do so Margaret sprang upon it, and ascended to the deck of the burning vessel.

"I shall stay with you," she said, addressing Sterling. "I will not live and see you die!"

An expression of strange, sweet surprise swept over his face. He gathered her into his arms, and a puff of wind filled the sails of the yacht, and tore it loose from the boat.

Margaret heard, as in a dream, the frantic shrieks of Hope, as she was borne away; the sullen roar of the flames beneath her, and the whistling of the wind in the rigging above; but she only realized that she was to die with him.

The flames burst through the deck; in one red sheet of fire they wrapped keel and mast. They played in zigzag lines over the ropes, and leaped like tortured living things far out into the startled air.

Sterling still stood, holding Margaret to his side—stood waiting the fatal moment when it would be sweeter to drown than meet those terrible flames. Most people would have spoken to each other their fears—maybe their hopes. They did not. Each felt no need of words. He was wondering if all men found it so easy to give up the world at the last; she was thinking how sweet it was not to be divided.

The heat grew intense; the deck beneath their feet glowed red-hot—the time had come.

Sterling, supporting the form of his companion in his arms, stepped upon the taffrail; he was about trusting their fate to the water. A strong voice rang out close at hand:

"Hold on a moment longer, and you are saved!"

There was a large boat bearing down upon the burning craft—a boat belonging, probably, to the ocean steamer which was lying just outside the harbour. It came under the stern; sturdy hands lent their aid; and a little later, Sterling and Margaret were safe.

They were taken to the steamer, and before sunset, landed at Middlebury. There they found the rest of the party awaiting them, having witnessed their transfer to the steamer's boat.

Three days afterward, the Sterlings left Cedarwild. Hope and Mr. Sterling parted in the presence of the others—parted as friends do, with a warm clasp of the hand, and a cordial good-bye.

Sterling took leave of Margaret last. He drew her a little aside and spoke in a low tone.

"I am going only to London; if at any time you have need of me, promise me that you will command my services?"

"I shall be happy to do so."

"Thank you. And now, may your life be peace. Good-bye."

He turned away—came back—looked as if he would have said something more, but, restraining himself, bowed, and passed out with his sister and Mr. Sedley.

Cedarwild grew lonesome again; all the sunlight seemed fled, and before many days, winter set in, bleak and dreary, with blustering winds and pelting snow-storms.

CHAPTER IV.

DURING the winter, Mr. Henderson came frequently to Cedarwild. People had begun to gossip freely about his constant visits.

Margaret was just the woman to do the honours of his princely establishment with graceful ease, and then they were so much alike! Surely, heaven must have designed them for each other.

Hope grew shy and distant. She indulged in fits of abstraction.

Sometimes Margaret found her in tears, and to all her cousin's anxious inquiring she begged only to be let alone—she was nervous.

Toward the first of May, Margaret received a letter from London, bearing a black seal. There was only a line, but that was of import, if one could judge from the fearful change that came over the countenance of the reader.

She tore the missive into fragments, dropped them into the grate, and turned to Hope.

"I am imperatively called to London, dear Hope, to be absent for an indefinite period. Oh you must devolve the hospitality of Cedarwild."

Hope began to question her eagerly, but Margaret checked her at once, and in the morning early bade the puzzled girl good-bye and set off. She arrived in London the same night, and was driven to an obscure hotel.

In answer to her hurried inquiry, she was shown up to a darkened chamber, which she entered, and drew the bolt of the door.

The pale, and fearfully attenuated face of a man lay on the pillow. His wild, eager eyes rested a moment on his visitor—he started, crying out:

"Oh, Margaret! my sister!"

She took his head close against her bosom; smoothed back his tangled hair, and called him by names of sweetest significance.

"I could not stay away, Margaret! I longed so much for a sight of your dear face; and daring all the danger of detection and public shame, I am here! A fever has fastened on me, and the physician says only some rallying shock can save my life; only some happy surprise. As if anything joyous could come to me!"

"Vincent—my dearest brother!"

"Oh, Maggie, it is hard to be denied the right of going home to the old place to die! Hard to be branded with guilt when my soul is innocent!"

"My poor Vincent!"

"Oh, how I have wandered since I saw you last! Always pursued by the terrible fear of detection. But lately this fear has lost its force. Is it because I am approaching that place where every man's heart is laid open, and the innocent shall never suffer for the guilty? Margaret, it seems pleasant to think of death."

She with her hot lips touched his forehead.

"Some time Maggie, the world will know my innocence. You will live to see my name cleared from this vile imputation. Hark! some one is coming!"

She heard and shuddered. There were heavy footsteps on the stairs—rough voices in the entry demanding admittance in the name of the law. Margaret started up, and stood like a rock against the door.

"Admit us at once, or it will be the worse for you!" said a hoarse voice.

"Never!"

They tore aside the door, pushed by her rudely—those myrmidons of the law—flushed with the heat of triumph.

"Well, miss, it has been an eight years' job, but we have found him at last! Now justice shall be done!"

They would have laid hands on Vincent Brande, but Margaret sprang forward, and struck down the outstretched arm of the constable.

"Lay a finger on him if you dare!" she cried. "He is sick unto death, and no law, human or divine, will uphold you in violent measures upon a dying man."

Her manner, rather than her words, impressed the intruders, they consulted together, and after reading the warrant for the arrest of Vincent Brande, charged

with the murder of Victoria Raynor, they put a guard at the door, and withdrew.

Margaret remembered Sterling's offers of aid and counsel when she should stand in need. He resided in London; she would summon him and ask his advice and sympathy.

He replied to her note in person. He was kind and sympathizing as a brother. He heard the full story, and promised to do all that could be done to soften the days that were coming.

All his spare time was spent in the chamber of the suspected criminal, and perhaps his presence, more than anything else, inspired Margaret with the vague hope she could not help cherishing.

Vincent sank rapidly, and before many days it seemed evident that there was not much of life left to him.

One dreary night the crisis came. Margaret sat on one side of the bed, holding his thin, wasted hand in hers; Mr. Sterling supported his head against his shoulder. The night was far spent; they expected his death before the dawn. Silence reigned in the room. How could Sterling speak when he could offer no comfort?

There was a bustle at the door. Rapid questions—hurried replies, and then the physician, flushed and heated, burst into the chamber. His genial face wore a look of triumph; he held in his hands a folded paper.

"Joy never kills," he said; "lift up your head, Brande, and thank God; your innocence is established! I have here the confession of Victoria Raynor's murderer!"

Vincent sprang to his feet, his dark eyes dilated, his cheeks grow to a vivid crimson; he reached out his hands eagerly, and fell to the floor.

Hours passed before he came back to life, but when his eyes unclosed, and they knew that was hope, Margaret sank on her knees and, unmindful of the curious ones around, thanked God for his deliverance.

Dying upon the scaffold for the perpetration of another heinous crime, Philip Cartney, a former servant of Squire Brande, confessed to having murdered Miss Raynor.

He had been impelled to do the deed by a knowledge of the fact that the dead woman was in the habit of keeping a large sum of money and some valuable jewels constantly in her bed-chamber. These valuables, however, he had failed in securing. Her shrieks had alarmed the house, and he had been forced to effect a hurried escape to avoid detection.

The confession gave all the horrible details with fenshish distinctness, and was duly attested in the presence of a justice and witnesses. Of course, all proceedings against Vincent Brande were at once stopped, and, at the end of a fortnight, Margaret took him home to Cedarwild.

Grant Sterling accompanied them. Vincent had formed an almost childish attachment for this man who had been so kind to him, and refused to go unless he attended him.

The day of Vincent's return was a gala one at Cedarwild.

The neighbours turned out en masse to welcome back the heir. The village bells rang out a merry peal proclaiming his innocence. The children strewed roses in his pathway—all was hilarity.

Vincent was happy as a prince; Margaret's heart swelled with joy. Hope was shy, but strangely pleased and happy.

Mr. Henderson spent the evening, and before he went away, he drew Margaret and Mr. Sterling aside.

"My kind friends," he said, "will you congratulate me? I have doubted so long, that I need some one to assure me of the certainty of this new-found happiness. Miss Brande, have I your permission to my union with your cousin?"

Margaret looked at him with wondering eyes. "With Hope? Does she—consent?" she asked, slowly.

"Here she is—you may ask her!" he said, drawing the smiling and blushing girl within the shelter of his arm.

"Hope, child, is it Mr. Henderson you love?" Margaret tore a rosebud in pieces before she answered.

"Yes, I do love him! I have loved him always, and I was almost killed with thinking he cared for you, when he did not one bit!"

Mr. Henderson smiled; Margaret joined their hands together.

"There is none other to whom I would more readily give my precious Hope. If my consent is wanting to your happiness, be happy."

Henderson kissed Miss Brande's outstretched hand, and led Hope away.

The great drawing-room was very silent. The odour of roses and heliotropes filled the air—the whole place was rich with peace.

Margaret spoke first.

"It is all so very strange. I thought it was you, Mr. Sterling. Hope cared for."

"And I thought Henderson loved you, Margaret!" She smiled half sadly.

"I have never had a lover, Mr. Sterling."

"Margaret!" how his handsome face flushed and brightened. "If I only dared speak!"

His fingers closed over hers.

"Margaret, on that day when you came back to that burning vessel to meet death with me, what influenced you?"

"Because—because—sir, it is unfair to press me thus!"

"No, Margaret, not unfair when I love you so! when I have loved you always, and tormented myself day and night with jealousy of Henderson. Why was it, Margaret—was it because you loved me?"

"Because I loved you!"

So it happened that early in the autumn there was a double wedding at Cedarwild, and Vincent Brande gave both the brides away.

C.A.

THE SUNNY SIDE.

TRAVELLER through this vale of tears,

Wandering o'er life's rugged path,

Yield not weakly to its fears,

Seek not all the charms it hath.

Troubles may with cares oppress;

Grief o'erwhelm thee in its tide;

Yet, though hope and faith grow less,

Turn ye to "the sunny side."

Even though Sorrow's hand be laid

On thy prospects once so bright,

Turn ye from the gloom and shade

That allures thee from the right.

Disappointment's mist may shroud thee,

Dangers all around thee bide;

Let not apprehensions crowd thee,

Look upon "the sunny side."

As thou journeyest thou wilt meet

Hours of joy and hours of dread;

But the last thou need'st not greet,

If life's brighter path thou tread,

Hope will never quite forsake thee;

Faith will ever near abide:

And despair e'en forsake thee,

If thou face "the sunny side."

C.

ISLA GRANDE.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

RYU AND HIS FRIENDS.

THE mental queries of Yola were soon answered.

"Here I am, Yola!" Ryu was heard shouting, immediately under the window. "This way, and you are safe!"

A tremulous crash followed, indicating that the door of the villa was being forced.

The voice was recognized by Yola, and she uttered another wild scream, exclaiming:

"Help! help! I am here!"

A howl of rage and disappointment burst from the lips of Nerle, and he turned upon his captive with a demon-like fury.

"That sounds like your lover!" he cried, "but I cannot conceive how he could escape. I do know, however, that you will not escape me! You are mine—mine!"

He caught her in his arms, with the intention of fleeing and bearing her away with him. He strove to confine her hands and keep his palm over her mouth. But he was now to learn that Yola could be as determined, on such an occasion, as she was usually gentle. She struggled with a strength and agility that was surprising. She writhed out of the firmest grasp he could put upon her—tore her nails into his face and eyes—continued her cries for help—and in every possible way proved herself the brave little woman that she was.

In a word, she soon exhausted the patience of Nerle, and destroyed his hope of being able to bear her off with him.

"Die, then?" was his savage comment upon this unexpected resistance. "They shall secure nothing but your corpse!"

He drew a large knife from his bosom and aimed a furious blow at her heart, as nearly as he could, guide it in the semi-darkness of the apartment. She avoided the stroke by a dexterous movement—writhed clear of his clutches—dashed wildly across the apartment—barely escaped another desperate lunge from the murderous weapon—and then, overcome with terror and excitement, coupled with her fatigue, she sank senseless to the floor, just as the noise and tumult caused by the invaders grew terrific.

Nerle uttered a wild laugh, as he bent over the

prostrate girl a moment, striking an additional blow or two, in the darkness of the corner in which she had fallen.

"She's prepared to see company," he exclaimed, in a tone of satisfaction and defiance. "Her lover is welcome to her!"

He was deceived as to the extent of the injuries he had inflicted upon her. His knife had experienced as much resistance as he had expected it to meet in piercing her body, but only the springs of her stays had been severed, and she was uninjured, save some slight cuts.

A single instant longer Nerle listened to the tumult caused by the invaders, and then he bounded from the room through a side-door, looking it behind him, and hurried to a Venetian window opening upon a balcony, from which he could look down upon his assailants.

A single glance told him all.

He beheld Ryu, Captain Brote, and nearly a dozen of the captain's men, the latter in uniform and fully armed, all pouring into the villa, the door having just yielded to the fierce assault.

A volley of curses broke from the lips of the observer, in a barely audible whisper.

"It is indeed that accursed pilot!" he muttered. "He has in some way escaped the fate designed for him. Can it be that the Count Regla and the whole of his companions have escaped?"

He remained at his post of observation a moment, as if the complete unmasking of his character and deeds suggested by this result had momentarily deprived him of the use of his faculties.

His servants were retreating through the corridors of the villa, before the invaders, shrieking with terror.

Menacing voices and steps were already heard in the stairway.

No time was to be lost.

"Curse them! they have not yet caught me," he exclaimed, as a wild spirit of defiance and rage glowed on his white face. "They shall yet have trouble!"

Darting back into the body of the building, he plunged into a corridor leading to the rear of the villa, emerged into the orange grove behind it, and hastened rapidly down the coast, in the direction of his vessel.

He was not an instant too soon, for he had not gone a dozen rods before a part of Captain Brote's men were heard and seen at the rear of the villa.

"Good bye to you!" the fugitive muttered to himself, looking back at them over his shoulder. "You are too late. The sloop will save me!"

At the same moment Ryu burst into Yola's prison, flashed a rapid glance around, and beheld the form of his betrothed on the floor. With a cry of anguish that was terrible, he caught her to his heart, bathed her face with tears and covered it with kisses, calling upon her to look up.

"My God!" he groaned in awful grief, "the wretch has killed her! Oh, Yola! Yola!"

This sad and wild scene continued about fifteen minutes, and then there was a quivering of her eyelids, and a faint trembling of her lips—just long enough for Ryu to notice how shadowy and ethereal she was—and then she opened her glorious eyes, first in a look of wild bewilderment, then in glad recognition.

"Oh, Ryu, Ryu!" she cried in her sudden joy, almost thinking herself in heaven—"how did you escape? How did you find me?"

While Ryu was explaining to his betrothed, and they were manifesting their love for each other, Captain Brote and his men made a thorough search for Nerle throughout the villa, but of course to no avail.

"The villain has escaped, Senor Leoi," he said returning to the lovers. "He keeps a sloop down the coast, or used to do so, as I mentioned, and we had better hasten to it. He's probably fled in that direction!"

Ryu assented, caught Yola in his arms, folding her tenderly to his breast, and followed Captain Brote and his men down-stairs, and thence to the beach, leaving the trembling and affrighted servants of Nerle crouching about the villa.

At this instant the brig and her newly reported consorts were seen coming down the coast from the mouth of the bay, in accordance with Captain Brote's instructions, and the rescuers expressed their joy at the fact.

"Would that they had come a little sooner!" ejaculated the captain. "It will be half an hour before we can get back to our boat, and get fairly under way in quest of the fugitive, in case he has fled by water. He's probably long since aloft!"

The little party hastened back to the boat, and embarked as expeditiously as possible. The vessels soon arrived opposite the villa, the jubilant expeditionists were taken up by the brig, orders were issued by Captain Brote, and the fleet made sail down the coast.

"Oh, Ryu!" said Yola, at this juncture, "I can hardly realize my happiness! What would have been

come of me, if you had not come to my rescue? You must never leave me again!"

Her face was radiant with joy, as she clung to his arm, and felt that henceforth she should never be separated from him.

Captain Brote and his men managed the brig with unusual zeal and ability, and she foamed swiftly through the waters on her way to the little creek where Nerle's sloop was usually kept. A sharp look-out was maintained for some signs of her, but none were seen.

"The fact is, *Senor Leol*," said the captain, as the fleet neared the creek in question, "I have but little hope of intercepting the villain's flight. We are a little too late!"

Ruy conducted Yola to the cabin, and talked to her in tender and loving tones until she fell asleep in his arms, where she had nestled, and then he laid her on a divan, covered her carefully with blankets, and returned to the deck.

"She's gone, sure enough," was the greeting of Captain Brote. "We have looked up and down the shore, but there's no sign of her. If we had followed him right up by land—but, no; there were not enough of us. Fact is, we shall have to keep cool."

He continued the search in that vicinity half-an-hour longer, and then came to Ruy and said:

"We will give up the search here, and hope to meet the rascal where he evidently belongs—at the haunts of Callocarras. Our first duty is, as you say, to release your suffering friends from the island. They must now be in the agonies of starvation, and every minute must tell in our progress. We will then go to the pirates' retreat, and it is possible that Nerle may take refuge there, or prove the villain himself."

The captain passed his orders to his officers and consorts, and the fleet was soon standing under full sail for the desert island, where our hero had left Count Regla and his party.

Ruy's heart was oppressed during the voyage with forebodings for the fate of his friends, but he devoted himself to the restoration of Yola, who soon bloomed under his loving and tender care, like a delicate tropical flower, and was more beautiful and winsome than ever.

The vessels made a quick voyage, arriving in view of the island on the morning of the third day.

Captain Brote had shared the fears of Ruy in regard to Count Regla, and they stood on deck together as they approached the island.

The waterproof tent was seen standing, as well as the open tent of the men stretched from one ledge of rocks to another, but not a man was to be seen.

"Are they dead?" ejaculated Ruy. "Alas! they have all perished."

He checked his utterance, at that instant beholding a joyful sight on the shore; Count Regla, his wife, Iolet, and Captain Romero were emerging from the tent, while from under the open blankets, the crew of the galleon and their comrades rushed forth upon the beach!

"Thank God!" said our hero, reverently. "They are saved."

The unfortunate prisoners welcomed the vessels with shouts of joy. They danced, wept, and prayed, and caught up their comrades in their arms in their wild joy and relief, for they had begun to fear that Ruy had been wrecked, and that they would perish.

The brig and her consorts were brought to anchor near the shore, boats were lowered, and Captain Brote and Ruy Leol went ashore.

They were welcomed with the wildest rejoicings.

Count Regla clasped Ruy in his arms in a fearful embrace, and then yielded him to the arms of the countess, who testified her gratitude by tears and kisses. Iolet and *Senor Leol* came in for their share of the greetings, as well as the volunteers from *Isla Grande*.

Ruy found that after his departure, the stores had been apportioned into smaller quantities, to last the longer in the event of delay in his return; and many of the men had engaged in fishing, by which means they had kept themselves alive until now.

Padre Lasso and his men were at large, and apparently making the best of their situation, the pretended priest having lost nothing of his liberal allowance of flesh.

The rescued party were soon transferred to the vessels, and Ruy led Count Regla and his immediate friends to the cabin of the brig.

Yola was seated, anxiously awaiting her lover's return, and it was with a proud and happy heart that Ruy introduced her to the countess.

Yola had never looked more beautiful than at that moment, her shimmering hair, her eloquent eyes, her pure and innocent face, her *petite*, childish figure, all seeming to have acquired new loveliness from her happiness.

Both Count Regla and his wife started and regarded her earnestly, and the latter said:

"Do I dream? It seems as if Nita Vicente stood before me! Is not this her child?"

The count controlled his agitation, and said:

"So, *Don Ray*, this is your little betrothed; is it not? How did you rescue her?"

Ruy told how he had found her at Nerle's villa, and a feeling of wonder and surprise was universal.

Yola embraced Iolet with much affection, and the next moment Lasso entered.

He turned of a livid hue on beholding Yola, and almost reeled. Quickly recovering himself, and rejoicing that she was where he could carry her off when he chose, he advanced toward her, offering her his hand, and said:

"Come, Yola, why don't you speak to your uncle?"

"You are not my uncle," replied Yola, gravely, while she instinctively clung to her lover. "You are no relation to me, *Senor Lasso*. You told me so yourself. I don't think either you or I care about keeping up our acquaintance!"

The padre bit his lips with rage at her cool speech, and contracted his shaggy brows to conceal the menacing light in his eyes.

"Oh, very well," he said, with a hoarse laugh, turning away. "Do just as you choose!"

"Did you hear what she said?" whispered the countess to her husband in deep agitation. "She is not his niece—and is the picture of my dear friend Nita! And the young pilot's resemblance to you! Oh, for power to solve this mystery!"

Captain Romero now entered, having been in conversation on deck with Captain Brote, and was introduced to Yola. He then stationed himself by the side of Iolet, with the devotion of a lover expressed in his glances and actions.

Such was indeed the case. The afflictions and trials of their stay at the island, the necessity for constant intercourse, had shown to Captain Romero the sweet temper and noble qualities of the hammock-maker's daughter, as well as testified to Iolet the sterling manliness of Romero. They were therefore now betrothed to each other, as was soon made known to Ruy and Yola.

Captain Brote had an ample repast served in the cabin as soon as possible, and the half-famished party sat down to it, with but one shade upon their joy. The shadow was the evident suffering of the count and countess under their doubts and hopes respecting Ruy and Yola—a grief they did not and could not explain.

The seamen and the *Isla Grande* volunteers were treated in their respective quarters to a plentiful repast, and the vessel got under way for the pirates' retreat, under the guidance of Lasso.

"I will take them there," muttered the pretended priest, as he stood on the deck, looking over into the waters. "I will have that thousand pounds offered me by Count Regla; I will revenge myself on Callocarras for seizing the girl, and on Nerle for playing me false! And then," and his eyes sparkled with a fiendish light, "I'll kill Ruy Leol in the general *mêlée*, making it seem as though the pirate had finished him, and thus get him for ever out of the way. It will then be easy to watch my chance and get away with Yola, after I've got my money. Yes; there is yet time."

His low chuckle was unheard, his fiendish joy unnoticed, and his guilty soul revelled in his anticipated triumph.

(To be continued.)

PRESENTATION OF BOOKS TO WELLINGTON COLLEGE BY THE QUEEN.—Her Majesty the Queen has, on the occasion of the Speech-day this year, presented to the Boys' Library a valuable selection of books, amounting to nearly 200 volumes, admirably chosen with a view both to the amusement and instruction of the young students. The following is an extract from a letter from Sir C. B. Phipps which accompanies her Majesty's gift: "I am directed to say that her Majesty has gladly availed herself of this opportunity of showing the deep interest which she takes in this institution, and of assisting in improving the usefulness of the library originally established by her beloved husband. Her Majesty would wish these additional books to be considered as a part of the Prince Consort's contribution to the Boys' Library."

VEGETABLE LIFE.—It has been calculated that the sunflower produces 4,000, and a single thistle 24,000 seeds the first year; therefore the second year's crop would amount to 16,000,000 of seeds in the former, and 576,000,000 of seeds in the latter instance. How immense the amount of vegetable life which may spring from a single seed! Happily for mankind, every vegetable embryo is not destined to give rise to a future progeny. Millions of seeds or vegetable embryos are annually called into existence, but a variety of causes destroy their incipient life. Many seeds are used as food by animals, and a great many more decay. Were it not for the operation of these causes, by which the species is kept within prescribed limits, there can be no doubt that the seed

from a single thistle or dandelion would, in the course of a few years, be sufficient to cover with plants not only every square inch of the surface of our own world, but the entire surface of every other planet in the solar system. But although nature has been thus careful to insure a repetition of the beautiful and evanescent forms, all plants multiply within prescribed limits which they cannot pass. When, however, the seed falls into a soil favourable to its germination, it will grow and become a plant, running through all the phases of the vegetation of its predecessor.

SOME of the most active promoters of cotton growing in New South Wales have come to the conclusion that its success is doubtful. This, however, is owing to the cost of labour (as is generally supposed) not to the character of the soil, but to the great uncertainty of the seasons. At one time there is a total absence of rain, and at others there is an inundation amounting to a flood, no two seasons having the same character. The vintage rains, which are now proverbial in New South Wales, must always, more or less, interfere with the gathering of the crop, to say nothing about the absence of rain at the time of its sowing. The company formed several months since in Sydney for solving the problem as to whether cotton would or would not grow in the colony has been dissolved.

THE WILD CATS AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

A FINE male specimen of this animal, now so rare in Britain, was presented to the society some little time ago by the Earl of Seaford, on whose estate it was captured.

When first brought to the gardens, the wild cat was extremely savage, spitting and flying at the head of its cage on the approach of any spectator, though now he has become rather more reconciled to his situation.

In form this animal differs considerably from the domestic cat, being higher on the legs than the animal, besides being much more powerfully and compactly made. In fact, in the size of the paws and the muscular formation of the fore-limbs, it more nearly resembles the leopard or puma than the common cat. The tail is short in proportion to the size of the animal, and differs farther from the domestic cat in the hair being considerably thicker and longer at the extremity than at the base. The head also is larger and flatter; the ears shorter, and rounder at the tips.

In colour the wild cat is of a dark grey, varying in shade in different specimens. Several dark stripes and brindlings are distributed over the head, body, and limbs, in some cases taking very nearly the same form as the stripes of the tiger, and in other individuals more resembling the markings of a common tabby cat. In fact, some domestic cats are very like the wild cat in colour, though of course differing in form and structure.

At the present day the wild cat is almost extinct in England, specimens of the true breed being very scarce; the majority of the so-called wild cats being merely tame animals which have taken up a poaching life in the woods through necessity or choice. These animals, though of course less powerful, are very nearly as destructive to game as the wild species, committing great damage among young pheasants, leverets, and rabbits.

When a rabbit is found killed and partly eaten in the woods, it can easily be found out whether destroyed by a cat or by any other animal, in the following way: if killed by a stoat, weasel or polecat, the neck would be torn open, and the flesh of the head and neck the first part eaten; if by a fox, he would begin at the hind-quarters, hiding whatever might be left of the carcass; whereas, in the case of the cat, the skin would be turned inside out, and the larger bones left, all the members of the feline tribe being incapable of digesting bone, the gastric juice of the animal producing no effect on any splinters that may be swallowed.

In the Highlands the wild cat is not unfrequently found, frequenting chiefly birch woods, and forming its retreat among broken rocks and in hollow trees, where the young are produced. The young animals remain with the mother until the next year, although I understand, in the case of the old one having a second litter the same year, those of the previous year remain in the vicinity, both broods keeping together until they attain nearly their full size and strength.

Since the large male I mentioned arrived at the gardens, three young specimens were captured at the same place, and reached the gardens safely a few days ago. They are about six weeks old, apparently, the markings on their fur being brighter and better defined than those of the old male. These kittens appear to have all the fierceness of the full-grown animals, for while looking at them they growled and spit, striking at me through the wires of their cage

with their paws, though I have no doubt that these animals, when taken young, can be tamed as well as any of the other smaller felids.

It is now a disputed point whether the domestic species is derived from this animal or not. Many reasons can be adduced both in favour of and against this supposition, some naturalists denying that the two animals will breed together. Trustworthy instances, I believe, have been known in which a mixed race has been produced, and these hybrids have also proved fertile among each other; while, on the other hand, it is alleged that the domestic cat is more nearly related to the Egyptian cat (*Felis maniculata*), the animal held sacred by the ancient Egyptians, and found often in a mummified state. This animal is found wild at the present time in its native country, and a fine specimen is now in the possession of the Zoological Society.

I have compared this animal with the *Felis catus*, and find that the Egyptian species resembles it in the shape of the body and tail, and certainly showing little likeness to any specimens of the domestic cat that have come under my own observation.—N. L. AUSTEN.

THE INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION AT ALDERSHOT.

THIS undertaking is a source of considerable interest, not merely to the troops in camp, but to many persons from London and the surrounding districts. Several portions of the exhibition are well deserving of notice.

Among them we may mention a very simple but effective machine for making lint, the invention of Private Southam, of the Royal Engineers. A very ingenious cartouche-box is also shown by the same corps. It is the invention of Corporal Dagrell. It holds twenty rounds of ammunition, and works round upon an endless band, and by simply touching a spring a cartridge is delivered into the hand of the soldier carrying the box.

In the military clothing establishment at Pimlico the production of hats and shakos of all kinds forms one of the principal sources of employment, and a considerable saving has been effected in the cost of their manufacture. In the exhibition at Aldershot will be seen the model of a hatter's establishment, in which all the stages of manufacture are very clearly shown, Corporal Elliot having evidently turned his practical knowledge of the craft and his own shrewd observation to useful account.

Of inland woods there is a very large collection, and many of the specimens shown exhibit no small amount of good taste and very careful execution. Wood carving is a branch of industry which has many followers in the camp, and here, too, may be seen evidences of tasteful design and skilful manipulation.

One interesting feature of the exhibition is the large amount of needlework, the product of the wives and children of the soldiers.

The loan collection is a very attractive part of the exhibition, and the spoils from the Summer Palace of Peking, from Delhi, Lucknow, and other places where our troops have displayed their valour, include much that is alike curious and valuable.

Photography is evidently well and carefully practised by the soldiers, and many scenes of home, colonial, and foreign service are reproduced by the aid of the camera with wondrous fidelity.

Some sets of carriage-harness and some saddles are highly creditable to the exhibitors.

In some instances non-commissioned officers and privates have worked together and exhibited jointly complete sets of furniture. In the 1st Dragoons two sergeants and a private thus exhibit together a complete officer's outfit of portable furniture, including chest of drawers, wash-stand, towel-horse, easy-chair, book-shelf, spur-rack, whip-rack, and other articles useful and ornamental.

The art of lithography is illustrated by various exhibitors, and some good specimens of coloured lithography are worked off by machines in the building. As a whole the exhibition is highly creditable.

THE MYTHOLOGY OF PEAS.—The mythology of peas is very curious, but still somewhat obscure. This much, however, is certain—that the plant and its fruit are in some way or other related to celestial fire. It may be that they were regarded in this light because they belong to the class of creeping and climbing plants to which such relations were pre-eminently attributed; at all events, the fact that they, too, represented something in the vegetation of the sky is substantiated by numerous details in their mythical history. The dragons that poison the air and the waters carry peas in their flight, and let them fall in such quantities, that they fill up the wells to the brim, and their smell is so foul that the cattle refuse to eat them. These peas are the lightning that seemed, as appears from a multitude of traditions, to fall in drops or pellets, and their smell is the sul-

phurous stench that clings to whatever else the dragon brings, and to the gifts thrown down by the wild huntsman. The Zwergs, who are closely connected with Thor, and who forged for him his lightning hammer, are exceedingly fond of peas, as every husbandman knows to his cost, whose pea-fields they plunder under cover of their caps of darkness. Peas were sacred to Thor himself, and even now, in Berlin, peas with sourcrot are a standing dish on Thor's own day, Thursday. That they are typical of lightning is further proved by their being used in the same manner as the thunderbolt and as hazel-nuts to promote the fertility of seed-corn. In Swabia and elsewhere peas are boiled over the St. John's fire, and eaten dry out of the hollow of the hand. They are thought to be good against all sorts of complaints, and particularly against wounds and bruises. It is also recommended that children in the measles should be washed with water in which peas have been boiled.—*Kelly's Indo-European Tradition and Folk-Lore.*

THE TREMOLLA NOSTIC.

THE Tremolla Nostic is a very beautiful and peculiar flower—one which has occupied much of the naturalist's attention. Yet it seems that this little gem of nature has baffled the minds of the most skilful botanists. Neither Tournefort, Linnaeus, Solander, nor Humboldt, could satisfactorily learn much of the curious blossom which has attracted so much attention.

All flowers are divided into tribes and classes; therefore, if we understand the science of botany, we can analyze any flower, even if we never before saw it, and tell all its properties, and to which tribe and class of its kingdom it belongs.

Therefore, botany is a most useful science to any one who may understand its beauties. But we sometimes see those little gems of nature that our minds, however penetrating, cannot solve the deep, unfathomable mystery of even a little flower.

Such a flower is the Tremolla Nostic, which has but little said of it. Its petals, its stamens, its filaments, its calyx, have not been very accurately described, from the fact of its being quite an enigma. It was celebrated among the alchemists of old, who used it in the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone. It seems to have been considered as a fallen star.

All flowers that bear a star-like appearance are most beautiful.

Any one who has gazed up into the heavens through a telescope has an idea of the variegated and sparkling appearance of those heavenly bodies. And any flower resembling a star, in any degree, is a flower superlatively beautiful. And such is the little treasure of nature which we will describe.

The Tremolla Nostic seems to have rendered research fruitless by being found in various analogous forms, which again resume their previous appearance. They are generally found in moist pastures, and after a wet and rainy night the earth in the Tuilleries has been observed to be covered, and a few hours after sunrise they entirely disappear.

Such a flower is surely an enigma to the skilful botanist.

Such a flower should be much admired for its heavenly appearance.

Let the reader imagine for a moment that he sees before him a large space of ground covered with beautiful star-like blossoms, the dewdrop upon its petals, and the air impregnated with its odour. Oh! how lovely it appears to human eyes. We gaze upon it as one of those treasures of God, sparkling with all its original beauty. As we attempt to grasp this little flower after the sun has risen, it is gone—gone—disappeared as a phantom, coming in the night as angels do, and disappearing as the sun pours his resplendent glory upon the earth. Yes; as the orb of day makes his appearance, this brilliant and beautiful blossom disappears—passes away—and where? Where dost thou flee, beautiful flower? Where are thy starry petals and honeyed calyx?

Mortals dare not say. Yet it has passed away. Oh! how wonderful are the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms of the globe!

A little flower—a faded flower—is to us, at times, a mystery.

The great botanist who wrote upon this blossom, said: "In short, we know nothing certain about this singular plant; it is a secret of nature which resists our most persevering inquiries."

There are hundreds of flowers upon which we could write pages of manuscript—for we could thoroughly describe them.

But the little gem which we have chosen for our subject is preferred from its very peculiarity.

It is a plant which some ignorant persons might say never existed upon the globe. Should any of my readers be inclined to make such an assertion, let them

study the science of botany for twenty years—as is the case with the writer—and they will find in it as many miraculous things to amaze their minds, as did the old man who went to church for the first time.

It is said that there once was a very ignorant man, who never had heard the Bible read—of course he was unable to read himself. He was prevailed upon to attend church. The minister repeated his text from Daniel, and commented upon that good man having been cast into the lion's den. He then referred to the Hebrew children—lastly, he spoke of Jonah's having been cast into the sea, and swallowed by a whale. The old man listened very attentively until the fish story was related; he then caught up his hat in a violent passion, saying he had heard lies enough before, but that fish story was the biggest lie yet—and he left the church in a rage.

So we see that ignorance causes people to doubt our veracity at many times, and on many subjects upon which they should be enlightened.

Many people to be told that there is such a thing as the sensitive plant, whose tender leaves will shrink and close from the touch of the rude finger of man, would exclaim:

"That is false—I never saw such a plant!"

Relate the story of the myrtle, and how stupid it might seem to one who never read the fable.

We are informed by mythological writers that when Venus first sprang from the sea she was preceded on the way by the houris, with a scarf of a thousand colours and a garland of myrtle; therefore myrtle denotes love.

Each little blossom has its language. Soft and enchanting are the strains of love, and many are the flowers which signify this all enrapturing passion of the human heart.

The beautiful flower we have described under the name of Tremolla Nostic does not signify love. The emblem is as peculiar as this little flower which appears before sunrise, then becomes invisible to human sight. The emblem of the Tremolla is: "Resolve the riddle." Strange is the language—yet it speaks, as do all other flowers.

Yet when people do not understand this science, the language of flowers is hieroglyphical to them; but if we can comprehend the meaning of those treasures of nature, there is much pleasure in conversing with another.

Well might they be called the alphabet of the angels!

I never cast a flower away.
The gift of one who cared for me,
A little flower, a faded flower,
But it was done reluctantly.

Even a child is enraptured with blossoms. With what eagerness do very infants grasp at flowers! Their little imaginations seem to be enraptured at the sight of a rose or a violet. They bound about in the flowery meadows like young fawns—they sing over them, and caress each little gem until it fades and withers in their grasp.

Let us roam with Tasso through Syrian lands, where soft perfumes diffuse their fragrance over the deserts of Arabia! 'Tis there the acacia waves its yellow hair.

The Tremolla Nostic has been our main subject, yet the science of botany and the language of flowers is so enrapturing to the mind, that we have touched upon many flowers which are well known to us all.

Wherever we roam we find that nature strews the earth with flowers—flowers that delight the child—flowers that tell a wondrous tale to the blushing maiden—flowers that add a new joy to the pleasures of those blessed with health, and which cheer the dark and weary hours of sickness. Flowers deck the happy bride, and flowers are strewn upon the bier of the departed.

We will conclude our subject by remarking that the Tremolla Nostic has been likened to a fallen star, yet it is most lovely and beautiful to gaze upon.

S. A. W.

THE cocoa-nut tree has produced a ripe nut in the palatial gardens of the Duke of Northumberland at Sion House, under the skilful management of Mr. Fairbairn. This is, we believe, the first time that so interesting an event has occurred in Europe, and we are sure that all true gardeners will welcome the little stranger with feelings of admiration.

In various accounts of the court ceremonies certain members of the Royal Family have been described as wearing the Victoria and Albert Badge. Many persons have thence inferred that this is one of the insignia of some new order established by her Majesty. This is an error. The badge is simply an ornament, or rather memorial, which has been presented by the Queen, with obvious motives, to each of her daughters as they have entered society, and to the Princess of Wales. It consists of the portraits, *en profile*, of the Queen and the late Prince Consort, the former slightly overlaying the latter, carved on an onyx, and sur-

rounded by a simple row of brilliant. The portraits have been engraved at Rome by one of the most celebrated artists in that line residing there, and the diamonds composing the setting are not only of considerable size, but remarkable for their lustre. Each badge costs about a thousand pounds, and the Queen herself not unfrequently wears one on the occasion of State ceremonies.

REMARKABLE PRESERVATIONS.

Among the most remarkable series of escapes from shipwreck and famine, of which there is any record, was that of a part of the crew and passengers of the *Blendenhall*, free trader, bound from England to Bombay, in the year 1821. There are many cases that might be cited of what would seem to be a direct interposition of Providence in behalf of the sufferers, but we do not remember any other that presents so many singular facts of this nature as the one in question.

The *Blendenhall* made a successful voyage till somewhere off the Cape of Good Hope, when adverse winds drove her far out of her course, in a south-westerly direction, toward a group of three little islands, called respectively *Tristan d'Aouha*, *Nightingale*, and *Inaccessible*—the first named from its discoverer, a Portuguese admiral, the last from its rocky formation and the fearful breakers that surrounded it, and which it was then supposed would be destructive to anything human attempting to reach it.

Finding himself at last so far out of his regular course, the commander of the *Blendenhall* resolved to steer for *Tristan d'Aouha* and take a fresh start; but in attempting to reach that island, he unfortunately ran among the breakers of the *Inaccessible*, and, before anything could be done to save the vessel, she struck a sunken reef and parted amidships. The crew had hardly time to cut the ropes and staves and rush forward among the passengers, who were wildly clinging to the head and bows, when the stern and quarter went down, and two of the sailors were crushed amid the ruins.

This sad event occurred at an early hour in the morning, and before the rising sun had dispelled the mists that lay like a cloud upon the waters, involving everything in mysterious gloom. A bright spot toward the point where the sun was rising in splendour indicated that the damp, enveloping cloud was being dissipated; and soon after the upper portion was whirled off with a gentle breeze, and a broad blaze of light filled the open space, and showed the *Inaccessible* island looming up, stern, rugged, and defiant, some two miles away, its awful base, around which the angry waters were seething and roaring, still concealed by the obscuring mists.

"Land ho!" was the universal cry; but the discovery brought little hope to the imperilled party.

The anchor, which had been dropped just before the vessel struck, was now weighed and secured to the cat-head, the deck was cleared of broken spars, tangled rigging and rubbish, and the foresail was spread to the breeze. The wreck now began to move forward, wholly at the mercy of the winds and waves, without steerage, drifting hither and thither, and whirling about in the foaming waters, as powerless as the anxious souls that clung to it and watched its motions. For many hours it continued to drift and whirl, and occasionally thump along over the sunken reefs, and then, to the great joy of all—for any promise of prolonging life carried joy to those desponding hearts—it entered a narrow channel, between two projecting ledges of rocks, and approached the island at the only point where it was possible to effect a landing. Encouraged by this, the crew set to work with vigour, and making due use of such materials as they could find, constructed a raft, on which a few went ashore, with ropes, and, after great exertions, succeeded in getting the wreck to the beach, where it soon went to pieces, though not before all had got safely to land, and had secured many necessary articles, including a quantity of wine and provisions enough to last them several days. This may be called the first wonderful preservation.

A fierce storm of wind and rain now set in; and the first night our shipwrecked voyagers spent on that desert island, proved a dreary one indeed; and when they reflected upon that lonely situation, thousands of miles from home, with no means of getting away through the roaring surf, and no prospect of human succour, they almost regretted they were still alive, to go through the pangs of mortal suffering.

Nor did their explorations of the following day afford them any cheer. The island was small and proved to be a rocky waste, without a single tree or shrub, or any thing possessing animal life upon it. A few miserable plants, among them some wild parsley and celery, and here and there some stunted reeds and ferns, comprised everything of the vegetable kind—all the rest being rocks, sand, mud, and water.

Nothing could be more dreary, cheerless, and desolate; and as the poor voyagers strained their aching eyes over the roaring ocean, and thought of their far-away homes, which they could not hope to ever again behold, a feeling of despair took possession of their hearts.

In a few days their provisions were all consumed, and the prospect of utter starvation was added to their other horrors. A careful search was made throughout the island; but with the exception of the vegetables mentioned, of which there was only a limited quantity, nothing fit to be eaten could be found. There was neither animal nor bird, not even a lizard or a snail, and a close examination of the rocks along the sea discovered not so much as a single shell-fish clinging to them. What then was before them but starvation? What hope of being suddenly provided with food on those barren rocks?

In this awful extremity, they were one night sitting around their gloomy camp-fire, glaring at each other and thinking who might be the first victim, when, as if heaven had destined to try them so far and save them at the last moment, a flock of sea-fowls came dashing into the flames, like moths into a lighted candle, and large numbers of them were easily knocked down and secured. This happened on several successive nights, and may be classed as their second wonderful preservation.

At last the birds ceased coming, and soon after their last morsel of food was eaten. What now remained, except death by famine still? How could they hope to be again supplied in a miraculous manner? Two days now passed without food, and they were suffering the pangs of bodily hunger and mental despair, when suddenly they appeared over the island a dense crowd of penguins, which had come thither, as if directed by the hand of Providence, to lay their eggs in the sand. They remained on the island for several days, and then took flight, leaving thousands and thousands of eggs behind them, on which our unfortunate voyagers subsisted for several weeks. This was their third wondrous preservation.

At last the eggs were exhausted, and for the third time gaunt famine stared them in the face. What hope of another miracle? And yet it came. While again suffering the pangs of hunger, and in the last stages of despair, one of the crew, who had gone to the summit of the highest rock, to take one more survey of the ocean, and perhaps precipitate himself into the boiling gulf, rather than wait for death in a slower and more painful form, suddenly came running into camp, perfectly wild with excitement, shouting:

"We are saved again! we are saved again! God has saved us again!"

"What is it?" cried a chorus of voices, though many thought the man was mad.

"Sea-cows! sea-cows!" screamed the poor fellow, fairly dancing with delight. "The flood has brought ashore millions of sea-cows! Come and see!"

Away, over the rocks, rushed the whole crew, with wild cries, like so many madmen; and when they came in sight of the water, and found their companion had told the truth, several of them dropped down on their knees and gave thanks to God.

The sea-cows, or manatees, had been washed ashore in immense numbers, and the retreating waters had left thousands, if not indeed, millions of them, among the rocks and sands of the little cave where our unhappy voyagers had effected their landing. This new supply of food lasted them several weeks longer, and may truly be called their fourth wonderful preservation.

About this time an attempt was made to open communication with the island of *Tristan d'Aouha*. The carpenter and his men had constructed a boat of the materials of the wreck, and four sailors now ventured to put off in her through the roaring surf. Days of anxious expectations passed, the crew each morning going to the highest points of the island and straining their eyes over the ocean, hoping to catch some sign of her success. But they looked in vain. The boat never returned, nor were the poor fellows who ventured in her ever heard of more.

Almost despairing of ultimate salvation, and yet working with energy to save their lives, the same party built and launched another boat, in which a few more daring adventurers put off from the rocky shore. This time heaven favoured their design. After many hair-breadth escapes and much labour, they finally reached the island of *Tristan d'Aouha*, on which a Scotchman, named Glass, and some two or three other families, were residing; their intercourse with the great world being through now and then an English trader, which touched there on her way to and from India.

The poor fellows were hospitably received by the little community; and on hearing their tale of suffering and wonderful preservation, the chief personage resolved to save their comrades, even at the risk of his own life.

And it was indeed at the risk of his own life, and the lives of all concerned, that he put off in his own boat to the dangerous island and brought away his shipwrecked countrymen; a few at a time, till the last party was safely landed where there was no more fear of starvation, and from whence they could and did obtain a passage to their native land.

Taken altogether, as we have said, we can call to mind no other record of shipwrecked voyagers having so many miraculous escapes from impending death.

E. B.

ACCLIMATISATION OF INSECTS IN AUSTRALIA.

In the pamphlet containing the answers of the Victorian Acclimatisation Society to the inquiries addressed to it by the Secretary of State respecting the animals that could, with advantage, be exported from, or introduced into, the colony, I perceive that the only insects mentioned as likely to prove desirable additions to the fauna, are "*Bombus Cynthia* and *B. arvensis*," to establish a supply of coarse silk not requiring labour to feed the worms, and the *Coccus cacti*, the cochineal insect."

In this matter I beg to offer a suggestion to the Acclimatisation Society of Victoria. Some time since they went to a very considerable trouble and expense to introduce the Ligurian bee into the colony; this they very successfully accomplished. Now, it is very well known to all entomologists that this bee, though originally introduced here by Mr. Hermann as a distinct species, is no new species at all, but only a lighter-coloured or yellower-banded variety of the common species, from which it has not the slightest anatomical difference whatever.

To imagine that a mere slight variation in the colour of the chitinous integument of an insect (which variation is not even always hereditary or permanent) should be accompanied by great differences in habits or honey-gathering power is contrary to all experience, and has been abundantly disproved by the test of actual practice. The so-called Ligurian bee is no better than the darker variety, than a buff *Coccyus* is superior to a partridge-coloured one, or a bay horse to a chestnut.

If, instead of expending their energies on the introduction of a mere variety (after it was known to be but a variety, and not another species) the Acclimatisation Society had turned their attention to the introduction of some of the large species of true bees from India, they would have done an essential service. The *Apis dorsata*, a very large and valuable species of bee, is domesticated in some parts of India. This is nearly double the size of our ordinary variety, but is a true *apis*, building the same kind of combs as our ordinary species. The insect has a yellow body without bands.

In Borneo again, there is another large bee, which is a more coloured variety of *A. dorsata*. Its body is nearly black with narrow light bands; but all the soundest entomologists regard it as a variety merely.

Either of these bees could, I imagine, be much more readily introduced into Australia than into England. The voyage is comparatively short, and the transit would be proportionally easy. There is no doubt whatever respecting the importance of the species distributed in India; the *Apis dorsata* is known as a most valuable and productive insect.

Of course, it would be more desirable in the first instance to introduce the insect to the warmer colonies of the Australian continent, and then gradually to move them southward as they were accustomed to the change of climate from the tropics to the temperate zone.—W. B.

A MONEY-CHANGER on the Boulevard, one M. Silva, has a Dutchman in his employ, a M. Stochvis, who rejoices in the possession of a pretty English wife. The wife of his bosom besought him the other day to invest five sous (2½d.) in the purchase of a lottery-ticket. As he had some sous jingling in his pocket he was glad to gratify so modest a request. They came to him a few mornings ago to inform him that he was the winner of the *gross lot* of 120,000*fr.*, or nearly £5,000 sterling.

PURITY OF CHARACTER.—Over the beauty of the plum and the apricot there grows a bloom and beauty more exquisite than the fruit itself—a soft, delicate flush overspreads its blushing cheek. Now, if you strike your hand over that, it is gone. The flower that hangs in the morning, imperiled with dew, arrayed as no queenly woman ever was arrayed with jewels, once shake it so that the beads roll off, and you may sprinkle water over it as you please, yet it can never be again what it was when the dew fell silently on it from heaven. So there is in youth a beauty and purity of character, which, when once touched and defiled, can never be restored. He who has spotted and spoiled his garments in youth, though he may seek to make them white again, can never wholly do

it, even were he to wash them with his tears. When a young man leaves his father's house with the blessings of a mother's tears still wet upon his brow, if he once lose the early piety of character, it is a loss that he can never make whole again. Such is the consequence of crime. Its effects cannot be eradicated; it can only be forgiven.

THE ORIGINAL BLUEBEARD.

For more than a century and a half, Bluebeard has been a favourite melodramatic hero; favourite, that is, with those who wish to find a tyrant as a foil to some ill-used damsel or heroine; and the more savage he is, the more intense is the interest felt in the story—by boys and girls, if not by "children of a larger growth." In this, as in some other histories, the more thoughtful readers occasionally ask: "Is it true?" There certainly was no real lady to say, "Sister Anne, Sister Anne, do you seen anybody coming?" but nevertheless Mézery and other French writers tell us of a man who really suggested to Perrault the idea for the story of *Bluebeard*.

Giles de Laval, better known in French history as Marshal de Retz, was born in or about the year 1596. Losing his father in 1616, Giles entered the service of the French King, Charles VII., and was actively engaged in the defensive war maintained by that monarch against the English, distinguishing himself in many engagements. In 1629, he was one of the captains under the celebrated Joan of Arc; and aided her in bringing provisions into Orleans. It is supposed that Giles was on this occasion created Marshal of France, in recognition of his military merits. Again we hear of him commanding troops against the English in 1630 and 1633, in which last named year his martial services appear to have terminated.

Now, there is nothing whatever in this career to denote a cruel or depraved taste; on the contrary, Giles de Laval presents himself to us as the Marshal de Retz, a man of high birth, successful as a military commander, and in high favour at the Court of the King of France. Yet the French annals tell us that this man, at the age of thirty-seven, commenced the abominable course of life which has brought infamy on his name. When twenty years of age, he had inherited large estates from his father; at twenty-four he had married Catharine de Thouars, who brought him still larger property; and when his maternal grandfather, Jean de Craon, died in 1632, another set of estates fell to him; inasmuch that Giles became the richest subject in France. This immense fortune was the grand cause of his ruin. He plunged into a course of profligacy and debauchery which diminished his wealth rapidly; and he sold one estate after another to defray his lavish expenses. He maintained a guard of honour of two hundred horsemen; and his suite, of fifty persons, comprised chaplains, chorists, musicians, and pages, most of whom were made ministers or accomplices in his acts of libertinism. His family, alarmed at this prodigal waste of means in which they all had an interest, obtained a decree from the Parliament of Paris, forbidding him to make any further alienations of his property.

Even at this stage we do not recognize what the world would call a monster; we see in him only a profligate spendthrift who joined licentiousness with religious observances in a way not at all unusual in the middle ages. But the worst was approaching. Craving for wealth to supply his extravagance, he had recourse to alchemy.

Failing, then, to discover the grand art of transmuting base metals into gold, he next turned his attention to magic or sorcery, under the guidance of an Englishman, named Messire Jean, and an Italian, named Francisco Prelati. He is reported to have now made a compact with Satan, offering to give, in return for boundless wealth, everything, except his own life and soul; as regarded the lives and souls of others, he felt no scruple.

It was at this time, according to the accounts which have descended to us, that he began to immolate children, even while fulfilling his religious duties in his chapel with careful precision. The poor little creatures, made the victims of his iniquity in various ways, were finally put to death, and their blood and heart used as charms in diabolical rites. His myrmidons inveigled boys and girls from the neighbouring villages into his castle, and they were never afterwards seen.

Other agents of his, during his tours from one to another of his castles in Bretagne, were wont to persuade poor peasants, who had beautiful children, to entrust them to the care of the marshal, who promised to attend to their advancement in life. The children were never again seen; and when outcries were made in consequence, the accomplices in De Retz's iniquities sought to stifle them by threats or bribery.

This continued so long, and the number of children who disappeared became so large, that the matter came

under the notice and interference of the authorities. In 1440, the marshal was arrested, together with two of his men, Henri and Etienna Corillant. Confronted with his two accomplices, Giles at first denied all knowledge of them; but a threat of the torture having alarmed him, he made what is called a "clean breast of it," by revealing everything. The judges were frozen with horror at the atrocious recital which he had made. There is no doubt as to the authenticity of the horrible transactions; and the manuscript reports of the trial (which lasted a month) exist in the Imperial Library at Paris, and also among the archives of the Château at Nantes. During a period of at least eight years, and at his several castles of Machecoul, Chantoce, and Tiffanges, as well as at Nantes and Suze, were these atrocities carried on. In most cases he burned the bodies; but sufficient remains were found to indicate forty-six victims at Chantoce, and eighty at Machecoul. Giles did not boast of his atrocities; he confessed them, and publicly asked pardon of the parents of the murdered innocents. Condemned to be strangled, he exhibited once more a characteristic of his strange nature, by begging that the Bishop of Nantes would head the procession which was formed on this occasion. His execution took place in 1440, about or a little before Christmas Day—some say December 22.

Probably on account of some personal peculiarity, Giles de Laval became remembered as *Barbe-bleue*, whence our *Bluebeard*. It seems to have speedily become a name of terror; for Holland, speaking of the committal of the Duke of Suffolk to the Tower, in the reign of Henry VI., says:

"This doing so much displeased the people, that if politic provision had not been made, great mischief had immediately ensued. For the commons, in sundry places of the realm, assembled together in great companies, and chose to them a captain, whom they called *Bluebeard*; but ere they had attempted any enterprise, their leaders were apprehended, so that the matter was pacified without any hurt committed."

As to the children's *Bluebeard*, it was written by Perrault in the time of Louis XIV., and has been translated from the French into nearly all the languages of Europe. This *Bluebeard's* propensity is not to kill children, but to marry wife after wife in succession, kill them, and deposit them in the fatal closet which curiosity would not leave untouched. We all know how another victim was saved, and how *Bluebeard* met his death.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Pretate," "Munigrey," &c.

CHAPTER XOX.

We deem our crimes forgot—that justice sleeps—
Even at the moment when her arm is bared,
And the bolt launched to strike us for our deeds.

Old Play.

GREAT were the rejoicings in the servants'-hall at Moretown Abbey. The certainty of Mrs. Bantum's departure occasioned quite a little festival. The butler brewed a bowl of his best punch on the occasion; and even the housekeeper so far unbent from her dignity as to quit the solitary room reserved as a mark of dignity for her peculiar use, and mix with the inferior servants!

"Here is a toast!" exclaimed the groom, whose face had been so unmercifully disfigured by the virago. "Bad luck to her, wherever she goes—and may she never darken these doors again!"

It was drunk with a general huzzah.

"An insolent creature!" said the housekeeper, condescendingly sipping her glass.

"A spy on the family!" observed a second.

"As for the silly fool who is about to marry her—" added the pretty housemaid, with a toss of her head.

"Don't say anything against him, my dear," interrupted the butler, with a shrug; "for his crime will carry the punishment along with it!"

In the midst of the laugh which followed this not very complimentary speech, the door of the servants'-hall was thrown open with a bang, and Mrs. Bantum, who had been listening, made her appearance. Her countenance was flushed with passion, and she glared first on one of the speakers, then upon the other, as if undecided upon which to vent her rage.

"Will it carry its punishment along with it!" she said; "envy—sheer envy! Not one of you but are ready to pull caps for him!"

This, of course, was intended for the female servants only—one of whom still further excited the anger of the half-drunken virago, by observing that listeners seldom heard any good of the selves.

"It will be a long time," retorted the nurse, "before any one hears any good of you! But we shall see what my lord says when he hears how I've been treated!"

"We mentioned no names," said the housekeeper.

Mrs. Bantum muttered something about "a pitiful excuse;" and from words there is no saying to what extremities the ladies might have proceeded in their excitement, had not the butler interposed.

"Come—come," he said, "let us part friends! No one wished to offend you—but you must admit that you have carried it with a high hand over us?"

"I know my place!" was the reply.

"And we know ours!" continued the man; "and, after all, there is no great ill-will! Come—let's drink a good husband to Mrs. Bantum!"

The glasses were filled, and all but the housekeeper drank the pledge. Her dignity had been too much offended by the airs of the nurse; added to which, she was independent: so she sipped out of the room in all the majesty of an upper servant and sixty pounds per annum.

The nurse was somewhat mollified by the compliment, and said something about not bearing malice. Her last feelings of resentment gave way when the butler placed a full glass of punch in her hands, and hoped she would not refuse to pledge them.

For several moments the lady eyed first the glass, and then those who had offended her: the attraction of the punch proved stronger than her resentment.

"Well," she said, as she took a hearty sip, "I bears no malice—it ain't like a Christian! So I don't care, as I am about to leave you, if I do drink your healths!"

"Hear, hear!" exclaimed the two grooms.

"But, as a woman," she continued, "I have my feelin's; and must say that the housekeeper is an upstart, proud, conceited, poor, snivelling creature, who thinks more of herself than others think of her; but I forgive her!"

"That's right!" exclaimed the butler; "a true Christian spirit! Allow me to fill your glass again, and drink to her health!"

Again the nurse's love of liquor got the better of her anger—and no wonder, for it was the stronger of the two; and the second quantum was drained as readily as the first. She was now so far gone that, had the toast proposed been confusion to herself, she would have drunk it.

The virago, who a few moment previously had been ready to pull caps with the maids and quarrel with the men, now became maudlin sentimental. She declared that she loved them all, and always had done.

"Pity we didn't find it out afore!" observed the groom whose face she had so unmercifully scratched.

"Ay!" said the butler, thrusting his tongue into his cheek; "we never know the value of a friend till we lose him!"

"Hear, hear!" screamed the housemaids, with difficulty suppressing their laughter; "who would have thought nurse had been so fond of us all?"

"Not I, for one!" said the cook.

"Nor I either!" observed old James, pointing at the same time to the marks of the lady's nails still visible upon the face of his fellow-servant.

A dance was proposed, and the romp completed what the punch and the brandy in the library had partially accomplished. Mrs. Bantum—who insisted with peculiar earnestness that it was her *feelin's*, and not the drink, that overcame her—was carried up to her room, descending alternately on the virtue of sobriety, and the merit of Christian forgiveness of injuries. The female domestics saw her to bed, and descended to finish the evening in the hall.

In a few minutes Mrs. Bantum slept; but her dreams, instead of a happy future with the fascinating Mr. Binks, in a house in the public line, were of the past—the dark past of her existence.

First, she was in a lonely chamber, watching the death-bed of a venerable old man, whose breath came thick and heavily. She saw herself, with terrible distinctness, sitting in a large easy chair, casting her eyes from time to time impatiently upon the clock, which wanted but a few minutes of midnight. The old man called to her, gave her his keys, and pointed to a chest of drawers. Well did she remember them, and the gold they had contained. Presently, in her dream, she saw a struggle between that phantom likeness of herself and the dying man, who endeavoured to remove a wet cloth from his mouth and nostrils; but in vain—his efforts gradually became fainter and fainter. The nurse turned upon her side and groaned.

Her next dream was of a fair young creature, dying, as the doctors said, of consumption—they must give some name to a broken heart, since disease has omitted it in its momenclature—the last breath was fleeing from her. In her agony, she pointed to a cradle, in which an infant was sleeping, unconscious of its mother's pangs. Mrs. Bantum saw herself in that fearful dream, cast the bed-clothes, with a gesture of impatience, over the pale girl, and settle herself in her easy chair.

This time, the impression was so strong that she awoke. A burning thirst devoured her. She saw a

cup of water, which the housemaid had considerably placed upon the table; but she could not reach it—her strength was gone.

She tried to speak, but voice was denied her. Her limbs were palsied by the working of the subtle poison which Doctor Briard had so cunningly administered. Consciousness alone remained—and that was her punishment.

For hours the guilty creature lay in this long agony, counting the moments, which seemed to pass on leaden wings. Her only hope was that one of the servants might come into the room. One of them did so, at a late hour in the morning—but all was over: she had passed away in solitude, without one voice to cheer or hand to aid her—died—like contempt—alone.

Great was the alarm at the abbey. Medical aid was instantly sent for; but when the men of science came, they could only shake their heads, and pronounce it too late.

Doctor Briard was the only person in the household who appeared to retain anything like self-possession. By his advice, the steward informed the coroner of what had taken place, and an inquest was ordered to be held the following day. The verdict was, "Died from apoplexy."

There were two persons in the family who alone entertained a doubt as to the propriety of the verdict—the assassin, and the nurse's successor. The latter under pretence of indisposition, requested to see one of the surgeons.

"Ha! Humph! Nervous, my dear madam," said the man of science; "this sad affair has excited you." Mrs. Brooks owned that it had excited her.

"Was she a friend?"
"No; merely a fellow-creature. But are you quite sure," continued the woman, fixing her eyes upon his countenance, "that she died from apoplexy?"
"Not the least doubt of it! What else could it be?"

The word "poison" was upon the tongue of the woman, but she wisely suppressed it.

"Brain congested—vessels full—every symptom!" continued the practitioner; "the consequence of her intemperance. It was proved, to the satisfaction of the jury, that she was so tipsy last night as to be carried to her chamber. Very shocking! But have you any reason to doubt the nature of the attack," he added, "which—"

"I?" interrupted Mrs. Brooks, alarmed; "no—no!" I merely thought that she had died, perhaps, from some other cause, such as a disease of the heart.

"You must not suffer this event to prey upon your spirits. I will send over a composing draught. You will be well in the morning."

With this assurance, the medical man took his leave and his fee.

"God!" said the woman, with a look of agony, as soon as she was alone; "I cannot be mistaken: there was the same appearance when my benefactress died—the same contraction of the hands—the discoloured nails: and she was poisoned—too surely poisoned."

Gradually she calmed herself, but mentally resolved that no inducement should lead her to take tea a second time with Dr. Briard, whose knowledge of Athalia, and her own former position in the house of Madame Duverny, alarmed her.

Perhaps the clue she had so long been seeking was within her reach at last.

Although Mrs. Bantam had been anything but a favourite with her fellow-servants, there was not one of them but regretted her untimely death, which several reproached themselves for having accelerated by their debauch on the occasion of her leaving the family; even the groom requested to be permitted to follow her to the grave.

Shortly after the funeral procession left the house, Goliah, full of hope in the project he had planned for the deliverance of his former mistress, arrived at the abbey, and was received by one of the stable-lads—the rest of the servants being absent. He requested to see the nurse.

"Come in," said the boy: "I'll tell her."
In a few minutes, Mrs. Brooks made her appearance.

"You wished to see me?" she said with an air of surprise.

"You!" exclaimed the young man; "there must be some error! It is Mrs. Bantam, whom I requested to see."

A few words explained to him all that had taken place. Goliah was overwhelmed with consternation and disappointment, and something like a feeling of remorse entered his heart; for he felt a doubt—and more than a doubt—that the nurse had not come to her end by fair means.

"Dead!" he exclaimed, in a tone of horror. "God! where will these crimes end? She has been poisoned!"

Mrs. Brooks turned very pale: the air of deep conviction with which the words were pronounced startled

her, for they were but the repetition of her own first suspicions.

"Poisoned!" she repeated.
"Ay! as you will be!" continued the visitor, "when they have no further occasion for your services, for neither the earl nor his mistress know the meaning of the word remorse. No matter," he added; "the hour of retribution is but retarded. I could as soon doubt the mercy of heaven, as that one day human justice will overtake them. I am not baffled yet."

He was about to quit the room, when the woman, placing her hand upon his arm, detained him.

"Stay, sir," she said. "You have made an accusation which, without believing, I feel a curiosity—a desire—to know your authority for: a desire," she added, "which you will perfectly comprehend when I tell you that I am Mrs. Bantam's successor."

"The attendant on the Countess of Moretown?" eagerly demanded Goliah.

"Yes."
"Oh! if I could but inspire you," he exclaimed, "to act a generous part—to admit me to her, but for a few minutes!"
"Impossible!"

"But to ask one question!"

"I dare not!" was the reply, given in so decided a tone that the poor fellow turned hopelessly away. "I am dependent—entirely dependent—upon the situation which I hold here."

"Will money tempt you?"

"No."

"What will?"

"I must first know," replied the woman, "who you are that ask the question, and your power to serve me. Confidence begets confidence," she added, with a smile, "and I—"

"I have no confidence to give," interrupted her visitor, who fancied that he saw, in the words of the speaker, an attempt to obtain some clue to his name and identity. "Farewell! When the day of retribution arrives, remember that you will fare all the better for having shown pity to your unhappy charge."

So saying, he turned upon his heel and left the house.

"Oh! that I dared trust him!" exclaimed Mrs. Brooks, wringing her hands in agony; "but no—I am alone—no friend to counsel or assist me. My fetters are riveted, and I cannot escape them."

From that hour the suspicion that her predecessor had been murdered became a conviction; and the terror haunted her that her end would be the same.

CHAPTER C.

Oh, devilish cruelty! Oh, subtle craft,
That makes the lips of reason utter folly!
Old Play.

GREAT was the disappointment of Mr. Brindley on the return of his assistant from his unsuccessful expedition to the north. He had counted on the influence of gold with the nurse, and decided to expend it with no niggard hand, provided she assisted him to restore his niece to liberty. With such a witness, he felt confident of success; without her, all appeared hopeless and uncertain.

"I will not be baffled!" said the venerable man; "at least, without a struggle. Powerful as her enemies are, thank heaven, there is yet a power in England stronger than their malice."

"And what may that be?" inquired Goliah, in a desponding tone.

"The law!" replied the goldsmith; "and I am determined to invoke its aid. Your evidence," he added, musingly, "is decisive upon the point of her sanity. The Chancellor must listen to me."

"Listen!" replied the young man, bitterly; "of course he will. Lord Moretown will receive due notice of the application, the point will be argued, and end, as it has done before, in disappointment. If you could only induce some powerful political personage to intercede?"

"I have it," exclaimed the old gentleman, after a few moments' reflection: "his wife, Lady Shanny."

"She is passionately fond of diamonds," observed Goliah, "and has not paid her bill these three years. The last time I called upon her ladyship, she told me to take it to Lord Warre. But I suppose the mad peer has forgotten it."

"All the better," observed his employer, rubbing his hands; "all the better. Make it out again, and order the carriage for me at three. His lordship, I know, will be engaged in the House, hearing appeals, so I can see her without fear of interruption. I only ask for justice," he added; "and even that I am willing to pay for."

Lady Shanny was one of those beautiful, reckless creatures, whose hearts direct them: feeling with her mastered reason. She was the slave of impulse, which too frequently led her to folly; yet in her wildest errors, one trace of Eden remained. She had a hand for charity—an ear for the pleadings of dis-

tress. A tale of outrage or of wrong—especially towards one of her own sex—was sure to excite her sympathy.

The grave has long closed over her. Those who recognize our sketch, may remember only her errors; many whom she assisted by her influence and power, think only of her benevolence.

It would be useless here to enter into a detail of the means by which Mr. Brindley succeeded in enlisting her in his cause. It is sufficient to say that he did influence her; and when the application came before his lordship, to issue an order for the medical officers connected with the Commissioners of Lunacy to visit the countess, it was favourably listened to.

After Goliah's statement, which was made on oath, we do not see how it could well have been otherwise. The hopes of the goldsmith were excited to the highest pitch at the success of his frequently baffled attempt to do justice to his niece. The very next day he set out, with the persons appointed, for the scene of her imprisonment and sufferings.

"I shall see her," thought the old man; "she will know my voice. The charm which craft and cruelty have woven will be broken—the child I loved will be restored to me."

Filled with these hopes and dreams, the journey appeared short; and on the third morning the party reached the abbey.

Dr. Briard evinced neither surprise nor confusion at their appearance: he was too well practised in death to betray himself. After verifying the authority with which they were armed, he coolly rang the bell.

James answered it.

"Send Mrs. Brooks to me," he said. "Be seated, gentlemen," he exclaimed, with one of his blandest smiles; "she is the female attendant upon the unhappy lady. I know not whether she has yet left her bed."

"And how is the countess?" inquired Dr. Grenfield, one of the commissioners.

The charlatan shrugged his shoulders.

"Is she violent?"

"At times."

"Any intervals of reason?"

"They are rare," replied the Frenchman; "but there are periods when her faculties are as perfect as ever."

"And at other times?" demanded the goldsmith, quickly.

"Memory is a blank," replied the hypocrite; "a perfect blank. She knows no one—answers no questions; appears not only unconscious of where she is, but of everything which passes around her. All that science can achieve for her has been done. I pronounce her case to be hopeless."

"I do not believe it," interrupted Mrs. Brindley, with a burst of indignation; she has been tampered with—cruelly oppressed. Lord Moretown is a villain, and his agents little better than himself!"

"It is not necessary that I should defend the character of Lord Moretown," replied the doctor; "but as to your insinuation—or rather assertion—respecting my conduct to my patient, these gentlemen shall be the judges. I am perfectly ready to abide by their decision."

At this moment Mrs. Brooks entered the room. She started at the sight of the strangers, but instantly recovered herself.

"These gentlemen," said the charlatan, "are come, with an order from the chancellor, to see your charge."

"In her present state?" said the woman.

"In any state," answered the goldsmith, who began to feel uneasy at the delay.

"Her ladyship is in the bath at this moment," continued the nurse; "but I will at once remove her, and assist her to dress. In a few minutes she will be ready to receive you, gentlemen."

So saying, she left the room—but not before a glance of intelligence had passed between her and her confederate in crime: which glance, although unnoticed by the goldsmith and his companions, perfectly reassured Briard as to the result of their visit.

"She will not be long," he observed. "May I offer you any refreshment?"

The invitation was declined.

In a few minutes—which seemed so many hours to the impatient relative of Alice—the housekeeper made her appearance, and offered to conduct them to the apartment of the countess. How the heart of the kind old man beat as he crossed the threshold of what he justly considered her prison. He expected that she would recognize him—rush to his arms—that he should hear her voice calling upon him for protection. Bitter was the disappointment which awaited him!

Alice was seated in an easy-chair, in a comfortably—nay, luxuriously-furnished room, dressed in a loose wrapper. The expression of her countenance was perfectly calm—the eye fixed on vacancy.

Mrs. Brooks was standing at the back of her chair, arranging her hair, which was wet, like that of a person who had just issued from the bath.

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen," she said; "but I thought I should have finished my lady's toilette before you arrived."

"Alice—dear Alice!" exclaimed her uncle, advancing towards her, and taking her listless hand in his; "do you not know me?"

"The poor victim made no reply.
"This is—your uncle! your poor, fond uncle, whom you used to love when a child! Have you forgotten me?"

Still no answer.
"Your boy—Digby! Digby!" he added. "Speak for his sake!"

At the name of her boy, a slight tremor passed through the frame of the victim; her lips moved. Nature appeared busy at her heart; but the medicine she had been artfully drugged with was too powerful. After one or two ineffectual efforts to speak, her head sank upon her bosom, and she remained silent and listless as before.

Both Dr. Briard and the nurse were relieved. At the attempt of the countess to speak they had felt a strange tremor—but it passed with the unsuccessful effort.

"You see, gentlemen," said the former, "as I told you, the case is hopeless. You could not have arrived at a worse moment."

Doctor Grenfield took a chair and drew near the patient. He was a man of great experience in such cases; but even his penetration was doomed to be deceived by the infamous precaution which her oppressors had taken; for the application of her relative to the Chancellor had been foreseen, and arrangements made accordingly.

"Have you any pain?" inquired Dr. Grenfield. Alice with difficulty repeated the word "pain."

"Where?"

Her uncle, looked at her anxiously, and repeated the inquiry. At the sound of his voice she slowly raised her eyes, gazed for a moment upon his venerable countenance, and then burst into a wild, hysterical laugh.

"God!" said the old man clasping his hands, "but this is the completion of their villainy! They have destroyed her mind, broken her heart! Fiends! accursed fiends!"

"Deeply as I commiserate your sorrow and disappointment," observed Dr. Briard, "I cannot permit such an accusation to pass without a reply! The form which the disease of the countess has assumed is by no means an unusual one. I appeal to these gentlemen!"

Despite the reiterated entreaties of the goldsmith, and the questions of the commissioners—who tried by every possible means to obtain an answer—Alice remained impassible as a statue of silence; not even a look of recognition could be obtained from her.

The medical men left the room perfectly satisfied that the case of the patient indeed was hopeless.

"We can do nothing," they said, after they had adjourned to the library; "there are no grounds for a charge either of cruelty or neglect. Lady Moretown is properly cared for—attended as befits her rank and misfortunes. The law declares her husband to be the natural guardian of her person, and the Chancellor neither can nor will—upon mere suspicion—remove her!"

No sooner had they left the room than the nurse—overcome by the effort she had made to maintain her composure in their presence—sank upon a chair, and hid her face in her hands.

"What a wretch have I become!" she added; "I whose heart was once good and kind! I, the minister of this fiend, Athalie! How can I expect that heaven will pity me, who have shown myself to be pitiless? But it is the last time!" she added; "the last time—though I beg my daily bread!"

After this resolution, she gradually became more composed, and, tenderly lifting the countess in her arms, conveyed her to her bed, and, seating herself by her side, sat with her eyes fixed upon the pale and suffering features.

In about an hour Briard entered the room.

"Are they gone?" said the woman.

"Yes," replied the Frenchman, rubbing his hands, with an air of satisfaction; "and fully convinced of the truth of my report! Only to think, that Grenfield should have been such an ass! It is something to have baffled him!"

Mrs. Brooks answered the observation only by a deep sigh.

"I feared," continued the speaker, "that the dose was scarcely powerful enough, so violent was the effort to speak!"

"Will she remain long in this state?" inquired the woman.

"About four hours," replied the charlatan, coolly; "when she revives, apply the essence I gave you!"

He rose to leave the room.

"You possess strange knowledge?" observed the nurse.

"Knowledge always appears strange to the ignorant," replied the doctor; "it is like strength to the weak or courage to the coward. I could send death upon the air you breathe or in the water in which you dipped your hand. But why speak of these things?"

"You have studied poisons?" urged Mrs. Brooks, whose curiosity upon the point seemed to increase.

"Yes."

"For many years?"

"It was a taste with me; but why do you make these inquiries?" he added. "Have you any wish to become my pupil?"

"No—no," said the woman, starting like a person roused from a deep train of thought; "the privilege of my sex—curious—merely curious. I should never have the courage to practise in your school."

Her visitor left her, when the woman instantly barred the door.

"I see—I see it all!" she exclaimed; "the agent and the means by which I have been made the victim! Athalie inherited the fortune of Madame Duverny—she alone profited by her death; and the odium of the deed was mine! I'll be revenged!" she added, "though I pay for my triumph over her with my life! It has long been a burthen to me!"

From that day, she attempted by every means in her power to ingratiate herself with Dr. Briard, who, finding her a person of superior mind, as well as manners, gradually sought her society.

"Come!" he said to her, one evening, as they were sitting alone together; "you have an inquiring spirit! Let me give you your first lesson in chemistry!"

The offer was accepted, and Mrs. Brooks became his pupil, much to the amusement of the servants, who whispered amongst themselves that the doctor had fallen in love at last.

Greatly did Athalie applaud her foresight in the arrangements she had made, when informed of the visit of the commissioners, and its result. She was one of those who left little to chance. To obviate all future danger, she conceived the fiend-like design of really depriving her victim of reason—of destroying for ever the mind she had failed to degrade—for which purpose it was necessary to see Briard.

She could not write on such a subject, or consult with the earl. Steeped as he was in crime, selfish, and heartless, he was not yet hardened to that point.

"I must decide and act without him!" she muttered; "he has scruples, and fancies that he hears the voice of the thing he calls his conscience. If it could speak," she added, with terrible emphasis, "I should long since have been deafened by its clamour!"

A few hours afterwards the abandoned woman was seated in her box at the opera, listening to the strains of Rosini, as cold and unconcerned as though crime had been a stranger to her nature.

During the evening the earl entered the box. It was towards the close of the session.

"Athalie," he said, "I have an idea of passing the vacation of Parliament in Paris."

"Why in Paris?" she demanded.

"I thought it would please you!" he replied, with a look of surprise.

"No—no!" said the syren; "I have no wish to quit England, and have decided, when I quit London, on taking up my abode at Moretown Abbey!"

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

A VERY curious method of reducing the intense headache experienced by fever patients has been lately pointed out by M. Guyon. It consists simply in pressure exerted over the integument covering the temporal arteries. It was discovered quite accidentally in feeling the temples, rather than the wrists, in order to ascertain the frequency of the pulse. Whilst the physician compressed the vessel, the patient exclaimed, "*Comme-vous me soulagez!*" and thus indicated the result produced by diminishing the supply of blood to the surface of the cranium. M. Guyon does not consider that any serious results of an injurious nature follow compression of the "temporals," inasmuch as the blood finds channels in the various other branches of the "external carotids."

TELEGRAPH ROUND THE WORLD.—The proposed intercontinental telegraph, which, *via* Behring's Straits, will complete the circuit of the world, was recently the subject of discussion in the New York Chamber of Commerce. It appears that Russia has undertaken a line of 6,000 miles, from Moscow to the Pacific Ocean, at the mouth of the Amoor, of which 4,000 miles, from Moscow to Irkutsk, are in operation, and that she has granted to Mr. P. M. Collins, of New York, a concession for thirty-three years to extend this line up to and across Behring's Straits, and then through her American territories to the frontier of the British possessions, a distance in all of 4,600 miles;

that the British Government have granted a similar privilege down the northern frontier of the United States; and that an application is now pending in the Washington Congress for like permission, through that country; thus connecting the whole telegraphic system of Europe and Asia with the telegraphic system of America. The chamber unanimously resolved to memorialize the President and both Houses of Congress in favour of the undertaking. The full completion of the project may, it is alleged, be expected within three years. The total distance overland by way of Behring's Straits, which are only 89 miles wide and 160 feet in depth, will be about 16,000 miles: but how the influence of the glaciers, which must inevitably cross the path of the wire, is to be obviated, it is hard to say. That glaciers rip up the ground whenever they reach shoal water is well known; and the wire must cross the shoals as well as the deeps. It is asserted that messages have been repeatedly sent during the present year from Boston to San Francisco, a distance of 3,000 miles, in two minutes.

NEW SILVER COINAGE FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

We have excellent authority for announcing the fact that it is intended ere many months shall have passed away, to recall the whole of the silver coins now circulating throughout the United Kingdom, and to replace them by an entirely new coinage of that metal. There can be very little doubt of the remarkable degree of success which has attended the recent reformation of the copper coinage.

There exists as little doubt that a judicious remodelling of the silver coinage will be productive of equal satisfaction and advantage to the community, to that which has followed the introduction of the bronze money. It must be patent to every person that the time has arrived when a new coinage of silver would be highly acceptable, for all must have experienced more or less of inconvenience from the dilapidated and used-up state of that which now circulates.

Our crowns and half-crowns, many millions of which came into existence as far back as the year 1816, and none of which are of more recent date than 1849, are miserably deteriorated, having lost by abrasion the greater part of their original impressions, and many of them 15 per cent. of their original weight. Our shillings are in as bad a plight, whilst the six-penny coinage is in a much worse condition than either, and individual pieces are frequently met with which weigh only two-thirds of the standard weight at which they were issued from the Mint. Three-penny pieces are rapidly following in the wake of their richer relatives, and fourpenny pieces are dying an unnatural death, for their issue has ceased for many years. We say nothing of the florin, because it is the youngest member of the British family of coins, and it has been subjected to less wear and tear in consequence.

The loss of weight among our silver coins is a great evil no doubt, but the consequent defacement of their impressions is of yet more serious consequence, for it facilitates largely the operations of counterfeit coiners. Such manipulators find it a comparatively easy task to produce *fac similis* in base metal of half-worn-out coins, and they avail themselves too freely of the privilege thus afforded them.

SMALL FIRE BALLOONS.

THE material for making a small balloon should be a fine, thin, close-textured tissue-paper. Having determined that the balloon shall consist of a specific number of gores or sections, say thirty-two or sixteen, a pattern for cutting them by should be made of pasteboard or some tolerably hard substance.

Suppose the entire height of the balloon, without its appendages, is to be three feet, and the number of gores thirty-two, an elegant shape will be got by making the pattern an inch wide at one end, three inches at the other, and eight inches at its broadest part, which should be at one-third of its length, if the balloon is intended to have a pear-like figure.

Varnish the gores with the ordinary boiled oil, and hang them up singly on lines till perfectly dry. They are next to be put together, which may be done with gum-water, or clean thin paste.

After pasting or gumming about half an inch of one of the gores, lay the edge of another about midway across the part pasted, and then double over about a quarter of an inch of it, dabbing it lightly from end to end with a clean cloth, to insure its holding securely. Two of the gores being thus united, unite two others in like manner, and so on, until, if you had thirty-two gores in all, you reduce your number to sixteen. In like manner proceed till you make your number eight, then four, and then two; hanging the sections up at every pasting, so that they may get thoroughly dry as you proceed. The two halves are last of all to be connected in the same way; and this part of the undertaking is then completed.

A circle of wire about six inches in diameter should be worked into the bottom of it, to keep the fabric of

the balloon at a sufficient distance from the flame of the spirit. Another wire may be fixed across this circle to hold a piece of sponge, which should be immersed in spirits of wine. A smouldering piece of brown paper held underneath the aperture will, in a few minutes, put the balloon in an ascending condition.

Having thus inflated the balloon, ignite the piece of sponge, and let it rise. When it is intended to inflate the balloon with hydrogen or coal gas, the latter apparatus is not needed; but a light car, or any other ornament proportioned to the ascending power of the balloon, may be appended to it, which will have the effect of maintaining it in the right position, and also of keeping it longer in sight.

THE NEW ATLANTIC CABLE.—Every possible care and attention is bestowed upon the manufacture of the Atlantic cable so as to render its success, if properly laid, a continued certainty. The core consists of a strand of seven copper wires, each covered with about half an inch of gutta-percha composition as an insulating medium. The telegraphic core is then strengthened by wrapping around it ten solid wires formed of Messrs. Webster and Horsfall's homogeneous iron, capable of bearing a strain of eleven miles of its length. The whole is afterwards surrounded with yarn saturated with a chemical compound which, by its poisonous qualities, will prevent its destruction by marine insects, shell-fish, &c. The new cable is most perfect throughout, and double the strength of the former one. The superior quality of the conducting-wires and the greater thickness will admit of an average of eight words per minute being transmitted, against a fourth of that number under the arrangement of the old cable.

VENTILATION OF SHIPS.

At length the attention of the authorities seems to have been directed to the absolute necessity of giving proper ventilation to our ships of war. We have long advocated this necessity. A contemporary observes:

"During the experimental trial of the Royal Sovereign on Thursday week, much interest was shown by the distinguished naval officers, and other scientific gentlemen on board, in the general ventilation of the ship, and the Admiralty authorities and Captain Coles deserve much credit for their laudable endeavours to make the ship as perfect in this respect as the exigencies of such a peculiar structure would admit of. On the whole the result is successful, although, probably from want of an original comprehensive plan, some defects are observable.

"One new feature, however, which elicited marked approbation, was the ventilation of the ship's frame and timber spaces, and consequently of the bilges, by a plan invented by Dr. Edmondson, of the Victoria, and by which all these timber spaces are, by a simple process, converted into ventilators, instead of, as hitherto, acting as vitiators, and the effluvia from which—too well known by naval men—have long been known as fertile sources of disease and discomfort to all serving in the tropics, where, intensified by a high temperature, they created, or at least fomented, the fatal fevers which have so often ravaged such ships as the *Eclair*, *Tweed*, *Highflyer*, and a multitude of others.

"It is clear that we have in this new system a means not only of preventing the action of such detrimental causes, but also of absolutely removing them, by acting on their sources, which are identified with the causes of dry rot in ships, which may be equally prevented.

"In steamers in which this system is adopted the funnel is the great ventilator, and it was found on the occasion of the Royal Sovereign's experimental trial, steam being up, that the enormous volume of 225,000 cubic feet of the foulest air of the ship was constantly being carried off by the air trunks at the rate of thirty-one feet per second. On the day previous, by the passive action of the funnel draught alone—no fires being lighted—one-third of this quantity was being carried off, and when this stream of foul air was intentionally diverted from its upward course for a moment into the space between decks its odour was very indicative of its source.

"It is well known that previous to the conversion of the Royal Sovereign into a turret-ship, whilst she was a three-decker, her bilges were always very foul, and by no care could this evil be removed. Now, with the present system, if the most ordinary precautions be taken, the ship can be kept perfectly free from accumulations of foul atmosphere, and there can be no doubt that this invention, if generally adopted, will materially improve the hygienic condition of the navy."

Let the reader mark what was the state of the atmosphere in the between-decks (where the men are berthed and usually so crowded together at night) whenever the outflowing stream of impure air from below was interrupted, and then he may judge what its effects must be on the health of the crew, especially

in hot climates and in epidemic seasons. Again, why should the bilges of the Royal Sovereign have been permitted to continue always offensive before her change? Does not this fact serve, amongst a host of other examples to show the urgent necessity there is of a thorough inquiry being instituted by the Admiralty into the sanitary condition and arrangement of our ships of war generally?

FACETIÆ.

The law is a pretty bird and has charming wings. Pity it has so terrible a bill.

Why is it vulgar to send a telegram? Because it is making use of flash language.

What is the sum of the great peace-lesson taught in the proposed alliance with Russia? Bear and for-Bear.

A GENTLEMAN lately heard a labourer gravely inform two comrades that a seventy-four-pounder is a cannon that sends a ball exactly seventy-four miles.

A LANDLORD at Bangor, who has property to let, has caused the following notice to be placed upon it: "This house to let; apply to Mr. H. R.—N.B.—Smokers and tobacco chewers need not apply."

What is the difference between the President's proclamation of freedom and hair-dye? One emancipates the blacks, and the other blacks the man's pate.

AN IRISH ADVERTISEMENT.—If the gentleman who keeps a shoe shop with a red head will return the umbrella of a young lady with an ivory handle, he will hear of something to her advantage.

UNWHOLESOME ROOTS.

Mother.—Doctor, before sending my son back to school, I wish you to prescribe for him.

Boy.—Those roots don't agree with me. I wish you would order them to be discontinued, Doctor.

Doctor.—What roots?

Boy.—The Greek and Latin roots!

MONEY is very scarce at Turin, and the joke of the day is that a man, having planned successfully a robbery of the Italian Treasury, only found a balance of 153*l*.

THE Yankees say that putting eagles on their coins has reflected little credit on the pluck of the national bird since the war began, as they have all flown away.

A COUNTRY girl was split from a waggon and had all her finery dirtied. She lay some time insensible. Her first trembling exclamation on recovering was: "I hope there was no editor in sight!"

"CABBAGE," says the *Edinburgh Review*, "contains more muscle-sustaining nutriment than any other vegetable." This probably accounts for the fact of there being so many athletic fellows among the tailors.

"POMP, what am I de jury of inkst?" "Wal, de fac is, nigga, a jury of inkst am a lot ob fellers wat sets down on a dead man to find out whadder he am dead for sartin or only playin' possum."

DR. SOUTH, preaching before King Charles, saw that potentate asleep; he stopped short, and in an altered tone of voice, three times called out, "Lord Lauderdale!" His lordship stood and looked at the preacher, who thus addressed him, with great composure: "My lord, I am sorry to interrupt your repose, but I must beg of you not to snore so loudly, lest you should wake the king."

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN.

This erratic gentleman delivered a lecture at New York the other day on behalf of the Christian Alliance.

On opening the meeting the chairman said he did not know what Mr. Train intended to lecture about. That gentleman had given him liberty to announce any subject he pleased, and he had accordingly announced "What is to be; or, the Course of Empire."

Mr. Train, in his address, said he had some ideas in regard to what is to be. He foretold the Chinese war. He had some ideas in regard to the course of empire, too. He believed, after extended travels throughout the world, that America possessed three-fourths of the enterprise and seven-eighths of the beauty of the world. If you are going to travel with safety over the world, you have got to get under the Confederate flag in the fourth year of the war.

He ridiculed the Government for its often-repeated promise that the war should be over in sixty days.

Mr. Train then asked his audience what he should talk about. He would speak on egotism if they liked (laughter). He did not believe in humility; he thought it the meanest kind of hypocrisy. A man is sure to find his level, and there is no danger that he will get above it.

He was talking to the dress circle. He hoped, as

there were but few, they would have a nice little social time. (A voice: "Talk about England.") England is only a little province of France (laughter). A revolution is coming there some time.

When the Fenian brotherhood rises and fires its guns on the top of the mountains of Ireland, America will recognize Ireland as a belligerent power, and then we will fit out Alabamas and Sumters from Baltimore, Wilmington, and other ports, and be neutral as England has taught us the definition of neutrality (applause).

He was devoted to the union, the constitution, and the laws. He believed the country good enough for Washington, and fourteen other presidents, is good enough for him. God Almighty has cursed that country with a great number of very little men (laughter and applause).

It was a mistake to build the railroads east and west, but God Almighty was his own topographical engineer, and made the rivers run north and south; and what God has joined together let no Secessionist dare to tear asunder (applause).

It was his earnest belief that, if Mr. Lincoln is re-elected in November, in less than sixty days he would acknowledge the Southern Confederacy (hisses).

CURIOUS DEFENCE.—A baker having stolen a goose, the owner cried after him, "Baker, Baker!" "I will, I will!" shouted he. Being afterwards brought before a magistrate, charged with the offence, he defended himself by assuring the court that he merely took it up to try its weight, when the prosecutor suddenly told him to "bake her," which he did; but finding he did not come for it, rather than let it spoil, of course he ate it himself.

NOSKS.—The French and English have each nine proverbs relating to the nose. Here follows the main wisdom of the vernacular:—1. Follow your nose. 2. He cannot see beyond his nose. 3. An inch is a good deal on a man's nose. 4. He would bite his nose off to spite his face. 5. He has a nose of wax. 6. As plain as the nose on your face. 7. To hold one's nose to the grindstone. 8. To lead one by the nose. 9. To put one's nose out of joint.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S LAST.—The following is the passage in President Lincoln's speech on a recent visit to Philadelphia, in which he made an allusion to Grant's recent movement across the James River. He said:—We are going through with our task so far as I am concerned, if it takes us three years longer. I have not been in the habit of making predictions, but I am almost tempted now to hazard one. I will it is that Grant is this morning in a position, with Meade and Hancock of Pennsylvania, whence he can never be dislodged by the enemy until Richmond is taken. "If I shall discover that General Grant may be greatly facilitated in the capture of Richmond by rapidly pouring to him a large number of armed men at the briefest notice, will you go?" (Cries of "Yes.") Will you march on with him? (Cries of "Yes, yes.") Then I shall call on you when it is necessary (laughter and applause, during which the President retired from the table).

SINGULAR EFFECT OF ARTIFICIAL LIGHT UPON TYPOGRAPHY.—The Academy Catalogue is one shining by daylight, sixpence by gaslight.—*Punch*.

A MAN TRAP.—Lady: "Charles, dear, I'm really afraid my crinoline is coming off." Husband (suddenly bursting into a cold perspiration): "By Jove, I've fallen into this bonnet shop!"—[Sold.]—*Punch*.

MRS. BROWN AT THE ACADEMY.—"Well, in all my born days, I never see such a many pictures; and lor! the gold frames was beautiful; but I got that squeezed I did, and the place were that stuffy," &c. &c.—*Punch*.

PHOTOGRAPHIC NOVELTY.—Some enterprising photographer is advertising that he does something out of the common line. Read this:—"Microscopic portraits taken from life, or copied from a carte-de-visite, or any size picture, and elegantly mounted in scarf pins, charms, etc. Free to all parts." How nice it will be to have microscopic portraits of some of our friends—friends that are of such a description that "the less you see of them the better."—*Pun*.

A MAX OF METAL.—The pocket of Mr. Clay, M.P., was picked the other day in the lobby of the House of Lords. The offender has not yet been discovered, but the police are already on his track. He is supposed to be a distinguished chemist who is deeply interested in the extraction of aluminum and other precious metals from clay. On being told that the money he had taken belonged to Mr. Clay, he will probably return it, stating he had only taken it as a loan.—*Pun*.

NATIONAL DEFENSIVE ECONOMY.—The taxpayers of England owe much to Captain Palliser, of the 18th Hussars, for his invention of chilled shot, iron shot more than equal to steel, made by being cast in a mould of cold iron. Captain Palliser's chilled shot

cost only 2s. a-piece, whereas steel shot come to at least £1 10s. The chilled shot invented by Captain Palliser, after having penetrated the side of an iron-clad, fly into pieces, which answer all the purpose of a bursting shell. Now, 30s. is a great price to pay for a shot, over and above the powder, and when that sum is shot at the enemies of England there ought to be plenty of them to show for it. It is as much as a whole host of them is worth; and the man who has given us a shot that will kill as many or more for 2s., deserves well of his country.—*Punch*.

A BOOKSELLER'S EXPERIENCES.

MR. ASKE HERWOOD, bookseller, and ex-mayor of Manchester, has put forth a statement of the difficulties attending the progress of the book and periodical trade, which many readers will be glad to see, for the sake of its fine and hopeful moral. Mr. Herwood says:—

"When, in 1851, I commenced the business of newsagent, the periodical press had barely an existence, and no newspaper published in England sold for a less price than sevenpence, the duty upon each paper being fourpence.

"The *Poor Man's Guardian*, published by Mr. Henry Hetherington, was commenced in 1830, and in 1831 he offered me the agency for Manchester and the district. The size of the *Poor Man's Guardian* was not equal to one-half of the *Family Herald*; it was, in fact, a demy sheet, and sold for one penny. The judges in the law courts decided that this small sheet, so unlike a newspaper, was one, and as such ought to pay the stamp-duty.

"It was during this year that an organized struggle of friends of the people commenced for the abolition of the stamp-duty, or the removal of the 'taxes on knowledge.' In the five years during which this struggle was maintained, 750 persons were fined and imprisoned by the magistrates for vending the *Poor Man's Guardian* and the unstamped press, and I was committed by the presiding magistrate for the space of four months to the New Bailey Prison.

"My incarceration failed to convince me that I was not engaged in a glorious work, in doing my utmost to level the barriers of ignorance, and enable the newspaper to become an inmate in the house of every man. After my discharge from prison, three other attempts were made to send me again to jail, but out of regard to the feelings of those who were dearest to me I paid the fines.

"The contest between the Government and the publishers became very severe, the parcels for the country agents were seized by the police and confiscated, servant girls carrying bonnet and other boxes were stopped and searched, the coach-offices in London were besieged by the police to capture every suspicious-looking parcel; but the ingenuity of the publishers was a match for them. My parcels were often put in hampers in which shoes are usually packed, and directed to a shopkeeper in Oldham Street who dealt in those articles.

"Public opinion never lost its sympathy for the men engaged in this battle of the press, and in 1836 the Government introduced a bill into the House of Commons to reduce the duty to one penny.

"The duty has been taken off the manufacture of paper, the advertisement duty has been remitted, and more than all—that for which we struggled—the duty upon the newspaper has passed into oblivion. The press is now free."

These little bits of local history are precious to the careful watcher of events.

TESTIMONIAL TO CAPTAIN SPEKE.—A testimonial, consisting of two handsome vases, wrought in gold and of antique pattern, purchased by subscription in the county of Somerset, was presented last week to Captain Speke, the well-known traveller and discoverer of the sources of the Nile. The cost of the two vases is £1,000, and they were, it is said, originally intended for the late Pasha of Egypt; but were never completed, in consequence of his death. The presentation was made at the Shire Hall, Taunton. The Earl of Cork, Lord-Lieutenant of the county, presided on the occasion, and in presenting the testimonial, adverted to the great discovery with which Captain Speke's name is so honourably associated, alluding, also to some of the facts connected with his explorations. Captain Speke acknowledged the presentation in suitable terms.

AN IMPERIAL LOOKING-GLASS.—A letter from the City of Mexico states that a number of ladies in that city recently subscribed in order to present a toilet-table to the Empress Charlotte. The work is now terminated, and was executed by six artists of the Mexican capital. The mirror, which is five feet high, is encircled with a garland of bouquets of silver chased in relief with much taste. The glass is surmounted with the imperial crown, supported by two griffins, beneath which are two escutcheons bearing heraldic

designs; festoons of rose and vine leaves also hang from the hands of two Cupids. On each side of the mirror is a vase, from which spring roses and tulips of a natural size, each of which is made to hold flags containing perfumes and articles for the toilette. The table is encircled with polished silver and crimson velvet, and is supported by Cupids, who appear to bear the toilette. Winged butterflies are placed at intervals on the garland around the mirror.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.—*Ilfrcombe*, July 6.—A bottle was picked up at sea this morning, containing a paper on which the following was written in pencil:—"The Ocean Queen, G. Armstrong, master, has been sunk off Bermuda, February 4, 1864. All hands, with the exception of two, James Dadds and John Williams, who were drowned, are in the boats. She sailed from Liverpool, December 11, 1863, and the owners are Messrs. Johnson and Lake, Liverpool.—G. ARMSTRONG, master."

THE "red, white, and blue" is no longer a synonyme for the Royal Navy. Henceforth, Lord Clarence Paget stated the other day, all her Majesty's ships will carry a white ensign; the blue ensign is given to ships commanded and partly manned by men of the Royal Naval Reserve, and the red ensign will be confined to the merchant service. The admirals' list is to be no longer divided into classes indicated by the three colours, but only into admirals, vice-admirals, and rear-admirals.

THE SPINNER'S STINT.

Six skeins and three, six skeins and three!

Good mother, so you stunted me,

And here they be—aye, six and three!

Stop, busy wheel! Stop, noisy wheel!

Long shadows down my chamber steal,

And warn me to make haste and reel.

'Tis done—the weary stint complete;

O heart of mine, what makes you beat

So fast and sweet—so fast and sweet?

One, two, three stars along the skies

Begin to wink their golden eyes;

I'll leave my thread all knots and ties.

My bodice must with green be laced,

And trimmed with flowers along the waist;

Slow hands of mine, make haste, make haste!

O moon, so red, so round and red,

Sweetheart of night, go straight to bed;

Love's light will guide us in your stead.

A-tiptoe beckoning me he stands—

Cease trembling, foolish little hands,

And slip the bands—and alip the bands!

A. C.

GEMS.

He who dies sooner or later than he ought, is a coward.

He who has good health, is a rich man, and rarely knows it.

One cannot always be a hero, but one may always be a man.

If you would not have affliction visit you twice, listen at once to what it teaches.

Water is the best drink. Exercise and pure air the best medicines.

Love is a weapon that will conquer men when all else fail.

There are reproaches which give praise, and praise which reproaches.

Lay by a good store of patience, but put it where you can find it.

Oh cast not a shadow over childhood! Sooner make all other seasons of the day of life cloudy; they are all alike, the third, the fourth, and the fifth decades; only at sunrise let it not rain into life; only this one, never-returning, irredeemable time darken not.

STATISTICS.

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE.—The return for the first quarter of 1864 shows a list of 15,949 volunteers; 15,473 of them had undergone drill; 7,727 were engaged in the coasting trade at home; 5,401 were absent on leave for short voyages, and expected home within periods varying from a fortnight to six months; 1,834 were absent on leave for long voyages, but expected home within a year; the remaining 987 had been either left abroad on account of sickness, or discharged, or deserted.

OUR LAND FORCES.—The following is the strength of our land forces now in the United Kingdom:—Cavalry, Household, 1,800; Line, 10,700; total,

12,000. Artillery, horse, 1,900; foot, 11,800; total, 13,700. Engineers, 2,700; Infantry, Foot Guards, 6,000; Regiments of the Line, 30,000; depôts, 18,000; total, 54,000. Grand total, 82,000. Of the actual strength of the militia assembled at the training which has just concluded, we cannot speak with certainty, but we believe the muster was larger than in 1860, when the number actually present on the inspection day was 102,000.

DURING the past week sixteen wrecks have been reported, making a total for the present year of 513.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Needles Point Battery, in the Isle of Wight, is now armed with six Armstrong 110-pounders.

An English brig, in attempting to break the Danish blockade of the German ports, has been captured and taken into Copenhagen. Serve it right.

THE Savoy Chapel in the Strand, which was burnt down last week, is said to have been the property of the Prince of Wales.

It is stated that the French government is a convert to Jeremy Bentham's views on usury, and will shortly repeal the laws which regulate the rate of interest.

EXCURSIONS on the river are quite the fashion this year at the Imperial residence of Fontainebleau. The Empress has a small steamer, in which she takes trips on the Seine with the different guests at the palace.

By an Imperial order, the Turkish commercial flag has been altered. Instead of the red ground and white crescent, as hitherto, the colours are green ground, with a red ball in the middle, bearing a white crescent in its centre.

A VERY grand festival took place at Versailles on Sunday week, by the illuminating of the gardens at night and the playing of the fountains. It was worth going a long journey to see, and the words "magnifique" and "very fine" (proving that England sees sights on Sunday) were heard on all sides.

NAVY OFFICERS.—By a return just published it appears that there are at present in the navy 390 officers who entered the service as masters' assistants and second mates, between Jan. 1, 1853, and Jan. 31, 1863. Of these 17 attained the rank of master in the period mentioned, and none reached the rank of staff-commander.

ANOTHER CLAIMANT OF THE DANISH THRONE.—A totally fresh Pretender has taken the field for the possession, not of the Duchies, but of Denmark itself. We are advised from Frankfort, July 1st, that Prince Frederic of Hesse, who had renounced his claim on occasion of the London Treaty, 1852, now resumes his rights in consequence of that instrument being declared inoperative.

TURNPIKES.

It is a curious fact that when Young was advising travellers to avoid Lancashire "as they would the devil," the roads in Ireland were in almost as perfect a condition as they are now, though the inns were detestable and the vehicles unsafe. But these perfect roads had their disadvantages, which are sufficiently indicated in the stage-coach advertisements down to the beginning of the present century, and which invited people to travel in "new coaches lined with copper," and more or less bullet-proof!

Many of the best turnpike roads in Scotland are due to General Wade, who, after the Disarming Act which followed the suppression of the rebellion of 1716, employed the disbanded soldiery in constructing the great "military roads" through the Highlands. His success gave rise to the famous distich on the obelisk at Fort William, in commemoration of the completion of the road between Inverness and Inverary:

Had you seen this road before it was made,
You'd lift up your hands and bless General Wade.

When Wade first traversed this road in a coach and six, in 1726, the Highlanders were almost awed at the spectacle. They could not conceive what the stupendous machine was, or why it was passing that way. Even when the general's deputy in the road-making travelled by one of the new roads in a chariot, the people rushed from their huts, and taking off their bonnets, as they looked up at the coachman, bowed reverently, taking him to be a far greater man than any of the finer folk inclosed inside.

Under some similar process of mental reasoning, the Chinese court rejected the first carriage sent from England, as a present to the Celestial Monarch, as soon as they heard that the box-seat was not intended for the emperor, but for a servant. That a slave should sit before his master, and turn his back on him, too, seemed an intolerable thing to a people who have now a more correct appreciation of the fitness of things as regards chariotting.

CONTENTS.

THE WARNING VOICE ...	353	THE TREMOLLA NOTIC ...	377
THE STEPMOTHER ...	357	THE INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION AT ALDERSHOT ...	377
WHEN WINDS ARE LOW ...	359	ACCLIMATIZATION OF INSECTS IN AUSTRALIA ...	378
ADVENTURES IN INDIA ...	360	REMARKABLE PRESERVATIONS ...	378
ALL ALONE ...	362	THE ORIGINAL BLUE ...	379
THE BIG TREES OF CALIFORNIA ...	363	WOMAN AND HER MARRIAGE ...	379
REGINA TRAVES ...	364	THE FATAL SECRET ...	381
THE BONDAGE OF BRAHMIN ...	365	SCIENCE ...	382
A CHINESE GENTLEMAN'S HOME ...	366	STATISTICS ...	383
THE DOUBLE WEDDING ...	372	THE SPINNER'S STINT ...	383
THE SUNNY SIDE ...	375	GEMS ...	383
LELA GRANDE ...	375	MISCELLANEOUS ...	383

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine: Vol. 9, No. 51: S. O. BEETON.—This is a really admirable compendium of tales, essays, fashions and needlework, and has been so long before the public, that its merits must now be fully known. The work is issued monthly in duplicate form; that is to say in the shape of a sixteenpenny edition and a shilling edition. Either of these is in itself excellent; but both combined, leave nothing to be desired. The literature is good and pure, and the fashion plates and work patterns quite recherché.

The Boy's Own Magazine: Vol. 4, July: S. O. BEETON.—This is something like a boy's magazine! and we should like to see what manner of boy he is, who would not be satisfied to his heart's content—may be delighted—with the monthly acquisition of such a treasure. There is in it fact for the earnest-minded, fiction for the imaginative, history, science and useful knowledge for the studious, adventure for the daring, and amusement for all. British boys cannot, therefore, do better than buy Beeton's "Boy's Own Magazine."

The Boy's Monthly Magazine: Vol. 1, No. 7: S. O. BEETON.—This is a somewhat younger candidate than the foregoing for the patronage of the ingenious youth of Britain; but it is equally meritorious. There is scarcely anything indeed which could contribute to the amusement and information of boyhood, that it does not contain. This is high praise, we know, but it is really deserved; and we like to give the palm where the palm is due.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. D.—You must appear in full evening dress. NEFTURK.—Your handwriting is very good indeed; it could scarcely be better.

COSMO.—"Cosmo" is simply a contraction of the words Consolidated Annuities.

G. M.—We cannot give you any advice; you must apply to a surgeon.

J. J.—We must decline giving you any advice; as you admit the wrong, you must take all the consequences that may ensue.

NORA.—Banns must be published three times in a parish church in each place in which the parties reside. You must apply to the clerk; his fee is 1s. 6d.

G. K.—Stamped agreements between landlord and tenant are chargeable with stamp duty, as leases, whether the tenancy be from quarter to quarter or from year to year.

R. T. O.—Leaves of parsley, eaten with a little vinegar, will obviate the disagreeable results on the breath of eating onions.

ASSENTER.—If a landlord enter and use apartments while his tenant is in legal possession, and without his consent, he forfeits his right to receive rent.

C. H. BRADBURY.—The colour of the hair is light brown; handwriting rather deficient in elegance, but plain and bold, and well adapted for business purposes.

L. S.—The disinfecting fluid is a solution of chloride of zinc; and even although it may have the property of restoring hair to the scalp, you should by no means use it; it is a most powerful poison.

GRACE R.—The name Archibald is derived from the German, in which language it means a bold observer; Matilda, or Maud, comes from the Greek, and signifies a lady of rank or honour.

GALEATA.—In No. 55 (see reply to D. O.) you will find a good and harmless recipe for a depilatory; we refer you also to No. 49, in which you will find a very full reply on the same subject.

H. H. S.—You will find your former question answered in No. 68. Handwriting bold, and yet not distinct, because you indulge in too many flourishes, and give your 't's too long a stroke; correct this, and use better ink.

J. W. C.—We do not think that a lad of sixteen, who is 5 ft. 4 in. in height can be considered tall; there is no remedy in nature for the peculiarity specified, though it might have been prevented by care in infancy.

H. SINCLEAR.—One of the two specimens of handwriting enclosed is that denominated the legal hand, and would be adapted for all legal purposes; the other is a commercial hand, somewhat too large and bold.

MARVY, being on matrimonial thoughts intent, wishes to correspond with a young lady of good family; he is tall, dark in complexion, with hazel eyes, and brown hair; and holds a good and promising position in the city.

EDITH, wishes to correspond matrimonially with a gentleman under twenty-one. She is seventeen, has dark hair and eyes, is considered good-looking, and has a very amiable and loving disposition; but possesses no fortune.

EDNA.—To obtain an engagement as English governess on the continent, you should place yourself in communication with either the Governesses' Institute (Mrs. E. A. Hopkins, agent), 9, New Bond Street; the Governesses' Institution (Mrs. E. Waghorn, agent), 34, Soho Square; the Gover-

nesses' Registry (Mrs. H. Harris, registrar), 5, Soho Square, London; or insert an advertisement in *The Times*. The handwriting is not only passable, but good; and we rather suspect you must know it to be so.

JAMIE.—Complet means a pair of rhymes, so to say, or two verses or divisions of a hymn or ode, in which an equal number or equal measure of verses is found in each part, called a strophe.

HELENA.—You will find in No. 54 a recipe for imparting to the hair a tendency to curl; and in No. 59 a recipe for a wash to counteract sunburn. Handwriting betrays great nervousness, otherwise it would be good.

C. McCULLOH.—The principal countries from which we import corn are Russia, Prussia, unfortunate Denmark, and the duchies now severed from her, France, America, Turkey and Egypt. Handwriting is good.

J. C. S.—The limits of age at which youths are received as engineer students in the Government dockyards, is from fourteen to eighteen; your other question you will find replied to by anticipation in No. 63.

EVA.—The name Arthur is from the Anglo-Saxon, and means a strong man; Jane or Jean is softened from Joan, the feminine of John, which last name is from the Hebrew, and signifies the grace of the Lord.

INQUIRER.—In No. 62, under the heading of HOUSEHOLD TREASURES, you will find a recipe which will answer your purpose perfectly. Persons should never bathe while the body is in a heated condition. You have addressed us quite correctly.

LOTH.—We gave in No. 51 and No. 55 recipes for removing freckles, and another in No. 59; and as we cannot repeat them, we must refer you to either of those numbers. Handwriting will be very good with a little more care and practice.

T. R.—The etiquette is for the chief bridesmaid to occupy a place on the left of the bride, to hold her gloves and flowers; the other bridesmaids range themselves on the left. But if any difficulties happen, the vestry woman sets matters right.

HERMINE.

[Lines for Music.]

Fast and fair the stars were springing
In the deepening sunset sky;
Soft and sweet eve's bird was singing
To a clump of roses high;
And through the grass a silvery stream:
Vest murmuring in a happy dream:
When, lo! on my breast, Hermine
Sigh'd low, "My heart for aye is thine!"
But ah! since greybeard Time was young,
Love's faint yellow gold was weak!
And oft for this has woman flung
True hearts away, to—live or break!
So now, with one who loved not more,
Wend her with the glitt'ring ore,
Dwells in the summer land of Rhine
My life's lost Pleiad, false Hermine.

J. H. D.

J. N.—No; in marriages by registration the wedding-ring is not absolutely required; but of course you must be provided with that "tool of matrimony," and place it on your wife's finger then and then, in the presence of the persons assembled.

GRACE Y.—We must refer you to No. 55 for a recipe for a cosmetic. The term comes from the Greek (*kosmes*, I adorn); the Romans gave the designation of cosmete to the slaves who were employed to dress and adorn their mistresses.

HOPLESS.—To enable you to sue in *formâ pauperis* you must swear that you are not worth five pounds in the world except your wearing apparel and the "matter in question in the cause;" an attorney and counsel will thereupon be assigned you by the court without fee.

NOTTINGHAM.—To secure a good company at a ball you must send out invitations corresponding to the scale on which it is to be given; and these should be issued at least a week or ten days beforehand. In balls and large parties there should be a table for what, &c.

NELLY.—All sudden or violent measures to get rid of corpulence are attended with harm to the system; and not the least dangerous is the "remedy" so popular amongst young ladies like yourself of drinking vinegar, which has the effect of speedily destroying the digestive powers. Attend to your diet, take exercise, and leave the result to nature.

Y. Z.—No, the term was not misapplied, as the designation convent may be given to a community of religious persons, whether of monks or nuns, and to the abbey, monastery or nunnery in which they reside. We hope you do not mean your signature to be taken as conveying a pun; if so, you deserve to be punished.

C. A.—The term "*coupons*" is derived from the French *couper* (to cut), and is applied to any cheque or other piece of financial paper cut off from its counterpart. In a special sense, "*coupons*" are dividend or interest warrants which are presented by holders of debentures. All coupons in Great Britain must now bear a stamp.

MARY R.—Your lover's brother must be a very abominable fellow, and doubtless counts on your natural unwillingness to reveal his unmanly annoyances of you. You must defeat him by making them known to his brother; for impunity now will probably encourage the fellow to carry his insults to a greater length.

A. DEMIRSKY.—Referring to a paragraph in No. 61, respecting the peculiar vision of the cat, this correspondent favours us with the result of his anatomical investigations on the subject. Hoping that our philosophical correspondent does not hold, with regard to cats, the theory of Descartes with regard to dogs, viz, that they are insensible to pain, and that "poor pussy," in his anatomical investigations, was not subjected to the process of vivisection, we append his observations:—"I have," says the professor, "ascertained without the slightest doubt, that the peculiar nocturnal vision of the cat is caused by the phosphorescent lymph which surrounds the pupil and illuminates it in darkness, or during peculiar instinctive disposition for prey, propagation, or during extraordinary sensations of joy or anger, and in harmony with the sympathetic warmth of the blood, which propels the phosphorescent matter into the whole eyeball, and subjects it to the dilation of the pupil, into which the li-

minating matter concentrates. This natural predisposition is particularly visible during daytime in the eye of white mice, black dogs, and even in the human species of albino. Whoever has watched the eyes of all these peculiarly gifted species, will be convinced that the action of the phosphorescent matter is attributable rather to the influence of the gradual approach of night, than to a voluntary power: a cat's eye being, by the change in size of the pupil, a more correct index of the time than the most perfect watch.

FANNY, who is tall, fair complexion, genteel, grey eyes, age eighteen, good birth, amiable, pretty and very loving, would, with a view to matrimony, be pleased to exchange *cartes-de-visite* with a gentleman about twenty years of age, who must be of good family, dark, handsome, and possess good temper.

CAVALIER, is desirous that some one of our fair readers, who would not object to a year's courtship, should take him "for better or worse." He is twenty years of age, with light curly hair, light complexion, and blue eyes; is considered handsome; and in height 5 ft. 7 in., and good tempered.

BOLTON C.—You are in error; the phrase *civis Romanus sum* (I am a Roman citizen) did not originate as a national boast with Lord Palmerston, though the perennial Premier did make use of it on a memorable occasion, and it has been frequently employed by others since. The first person who used it was no other than St. Paul.

L. O.—Coterie means a friendly or select party, club or association, of limited numbers. The word as it stands is French, though it probably comes from the Latin *co*, in former times, when merchants joined in an enterprise, they were termed a coterie, because each subscribed his quota; but it soon lost this signification for its present one.

MARINA.—You can preserve your specimens of scabell botany in this wise:—After well cleaning and pressing, brush the coarser kinds of algae over with spirits of turpentine, in which two or three small lumps of gum elastic have been dissolved; two-thirds of a small pint is the right proportion, and it will make the specimens retain a fresh appearance.

PENNY, a gentleman approaching middle age, of medium height, having auburn hair, and possessing a highly accomplished mind and good taste, with an income of £300 a year from business, is anxious for a matrimonial introduction to a lady from twenty-five to thirty years of age, sensible, religious, good looking or of pleasing expression, and of some means.

WILLIAM GILLING.—The following mixture is very useful in all cutaneous eruptions:—Ipecacuanha wine, four drachms; flowers of sulphur, two drachms; tincture of carlium, one ounce. Mix, take one teaspoonful three times a day in a wineglassful of water, and avoid excess in diet. In the reply to "Donald M.," in No. 53, you will find a good recipe for promoting the growth of the hair.

ANNIE, who is tall, fair complexion, genteel, dark brown eyes, thin, age seventeen, of high birth, amiable, pretty and very loving, would be pleased to exchange, matrimonially, *cartes-de-visite* with a gentleman about nineteen years of age; who must be also of high birth, and may be either dark or fair, but not under six feet in height, handsome, and good tempered.

ROSE AND LILY, beseech us to aid them in obtaining bene "Rose" is tall, dark, and of commanding figure, age twenty-five, very fond of singing, and thoroughly domesticated. "Lily" is rather below the middle height, has blue eyes, and fair complexion, with chestnut hair, and is also domesticated. Both young ladies would value amiability of disposition and kindness more than riches.

IRLANDAISE.—We regret that we cannot supply such a complimentary correspondent as you are with the request—she being no specific, that we are aware of for the purpose in view. The state of your general health must be low and the blood very much deteriorated for such an unpleasant skin affection to make its appearance; avoid unwholesome food, and consult a medical man.

FRANCE HAMLET.—When lovers quarrel, and any "engagement" that may have been entered into is broken of the proper thing to do is promptly to return letters, presents, and so forth, which had been interchanged. If your fickle Ophelia does not return your letters and presents voluntarily, it would not be at all improper or ungracious to write and request her to do so, and that is the course which you had better pursue.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—"Topsy" thinks she should make "Solitary Walter" a good helpmate. In twenty years of age, has fair complexion, dark brown hair, blue eyes; "Topsy" has no wealth, but possesses a very romantic disposition.—"G. E. O. N." places his hand and heart at the disposal of "Bell Osbourne." He is twenty-three years of age, rather good-looking, of a lively and amiable temper, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, fair complexion, and is fond of music.—"W. H. H." also offers himself to "Belle Osbourne." He is twenty-four years of age, of middle height, good-looking, good-tempered, fond of home, and flatters himself that he can make "Belle Osbourne" happy.—"Idaho" intimates for the information of "Solitary Walter" that she is dark, about the middle stature, considered rather good-looking, possesses a good temper, has received a thorough English education, and is very domesticated. She is twenty-four, and flatters herself that she could make a very loving companion, and hopes that "Walter" is of a loving disposition and fond of home.

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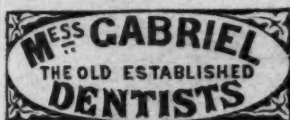
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129

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PART 16, VOL. III.—SEPTEMBER, 1864.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
THE WARNING VOICE	385, 417, 449, 481	CATHERINE SEDLEY	427
THE STEPMOTHER	389, 421, 461, 489	FATHAN WAR-DANCE	427
THE BONDAGE OF BRANDON	397, 429, 453, 485	THE SCOTS GUARD	428
THE FATAL SECRET	401, 433, 465, 497	ABDALLA'S PRESENTIMENT	436
ALL ALONE	404, 439, 468, 508	THE DIFFERENCE TO YOU	437
WOMAN AND HER MASTER	411, 442, 474	ANECDOTES OF ENGLISH JUDGES	438
ISLA GRANDE	395	THE LIGHTKEEPER OF RAVENSCLIFFE	457
THE SAVOY CHAPEL	391	THE MOTHER'S LESSON	462
THE ENGAGEMENT RING	392	ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE	463
THE MONTENEGRINES	397	ROBERT BOWMAN	467
ADVENTURE WITH A BEAR	407	THE TORN COAT	472
THE MURDERER'S TRACK	408	THE MAID OF SCIO	473
THE BARBER'S GHOST	409	EVA LEELAND	492
THE PERILS OF MONT BLANC	410	THE CONFEDERATE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF	495
ANCIENT AND MODERN HUMBUGS OF THE WORLD	412	THE TROPIC ROSE AND ENGLISH LILY	500
INSTANCES OF LONGEVITY	413	THE OLD MINSTREL OF POMPEII	508
VALLEY OF MEXICO	423	FACETIE—MISCELLANEOUS—SCIENCE—STATISTICS—GEMS	
OPIMUM EATING	424	— HOUSEHOLD TREASURES—POETRY — NOTICES TO	
MY MIDNIGHT SMOKE	424	CORRESPONDENTS.	

ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE		PAGE
ANDREW NOLAN'S GLIMPSE OF BEATRICE AND HIS RIVAL	385	MR. LITTLEBOY TAKES POSSESSION OF MORE THAN THE	
THE NABOB GIVES MRS. WILLIS A STRANGE RECEPTION	389	PORTMANTEAU	453
GIRLING'S ATTACK ANTICIPATED	400	THE ALEXANDRA PALACE AND GROUNDS AT WOOD GREEN	464
THE VISION THAT HAUNTED CLAUDE FONTAINE	401	ISOLA RESOLVES TO INVESTIGATE THE STRANGE NOISES	465
DONNA XIMENA EAVESDROPPING IN THE BALCONY	417	YEZEDE'S NOCTURNAL VISIT TO DARN CROOK	481
ESTHER'S DISMISSAL	421	THE BALL AT GIBRALTAR	485
REGINALD'S STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE	432	GENERAL R. E. LEE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE SOUTH-	
CARRIE'S SORROW	433	ERN FORCES	496
LORD INGARSTONE EXPRESSES HIS SUSPICION OF HOLT	449	THE ELOPEMENT	497

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